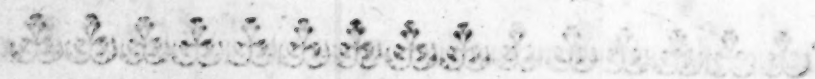




THE
Impertinent LOVERS:
OR, A
Coquet at her Wit's End.
A
COMEDY.





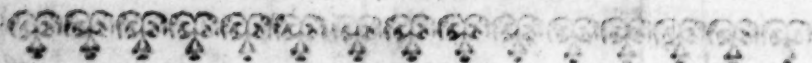
THE
IMPETUOUS LOVERS:

OR A

COMEDY. Wm. & Eng.



COMEDY.



THE
Impertinent LOVERS:

OR, A

Coquet at her Wit's End.

A

COMEDY.

Acted at the THEATRE-ROYAL
in Drury-Lane.

With a PREFACE, and Re-
marks upon its Usage.

Submitted to Sir RICHARD STEEL,
and the three Gentlemen concerned
with him as Patentees.

By a Citizen of London.

Extorta venia, violentia est.

L O N D O N:

Printed and Sold by J. ROBERTS in *Warwick-Lane*;
A. DODD, at the *Peacock* without *Temple-Bar*;
and the Booksellers of *London* and *Westminster*. 1723.
Price 1s. 6d.

THE
IMPETUOUS LOVERS:

OR, A

Comedy at her Wit's End,

A

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With a Prologue, and Re-
marks.



Submitted to the Honorable
and the three Gentlemen concerned
with him as Patrons.

By a Citizen of London.

Printed and sold by J. Roberts in Warwick-Lane.

L O N D O N :

Printed and sold by J. Roberts in Warwick-Lane.
A. D. 1711. at the Theatre-royal, Drury-Lane.
and the Bookellers of London and Westminster.
Price 1s. 6d.



THE PREFACE.

THE following Play, hath suffer'd so much in the Performance, thro' the Ignorance, and disingenuity of the Actors; that I am never to be forgiven by my Friends (I am told), if I don't Resent it: It would indeed be doing Injustice to myself, and to the last Degree Affronting them; to sit tamely down by the Abuse and Stupidly to disregard it: I therefore Publish it as it was Originally writ, Word for Word, whereby the World will be satisfy'd it could not be for my Interest that They were impos'd upon; but on the Contrary, That I have been greatly Injur'd thereby; it having been first cruelly Mangl'd by them, and afterwards most barbarous and inhumanly Murder'd.

The imperfect Excuse which was made after the Play was over, (viz.) That the Company was

A

small

ii *The P R E F A C E.*

small, and in part indispos'd, and that therefore they found themselves incapable of Continuing it ; looses all it Influence and Vertue, in that, if their doing it had been Impracticable, they should not have undertook it.

It is doing no little Violence to my Nature, to acquaint the Reader in this Manner, through what insincere and equivocal Usage, what evasive and sorry Treatment it hath made its way into the World : Such I believe, as no Entertainment of this Kind ever met with before ; the Difficulties of a hot Summer, an empty Town, and the Youth and Inexperience of the Actors, were Prejudices it was prepar'd to struggle with ; but Oppression is not to be defended against from an open Temper, which knows not how to do a Wrong, nor even to be Suspicious of any : After the Play had been four Months in their Hands, it was to be Expected, they would have been perfect in their Parts, although it could not that they should Excel in them.

I know not how to be enough Grateful to all my Friends for the many generous and obliging Encouragements they did, and did Design to give it ; some Men are so invinsibly Modest, it is impossible for them to ask a Favour, some so superlatively Good, that they seek Occasions to Prevent

The P R E F A C E. *iii*

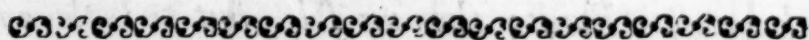
vent them therein: To appear in Defence of the Weak, the Friendless, and the obscure, are singular Attainments in Vertue, and of which they are as eminent Instances as ever was: To them it is owing, that I begin to Know the World and myself: --Nothing did they leave unsaid to Disuade me from giving it this Company! --- The Time of Tear would have been a sufficient Objection to a Man less infatuated; and I cannot help Thinking there is something Kind in the Reproach they now make me, (*viz.*) it is no more then might necessarily have been expected from the People.

What should be said for it self is, that it was written many Tears since, under not a few Disadvantages, and more for a private Amusement, then the publick View; no Body better knows its Faults then my self, but to little am I inclin'd, either to Amend, or Defend them, that I have not since it was first finish'd, alter'd, or added one Word: The unities of the Drama are perhaps so exactly observ'd, and the Scenes more intire and unbroken, then is usual to the British Stage.

I have Drawn up a Minuet of my Case, which, is humbly submitted to Sir Richard Steel, and the three Gentlemen concern'd with him in the Patent; all of whom in their special Pro-
A 2 vinces,

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vinces, (for I am not Personally known to them) I look upon, to be the Honour and Ornament of the British Theatre: As the Reformation of the Stage is of the last Importance to Mankind, the Steps which have been lately taken towards it, can not but be pleasing to every honest Englishman who hath the welfare of his Country in View; Greater Things are yet Expected from them, to bring the Stage into just Esteem, and to make her what she certainly is, (under proper Regulations) the School of Vertue. From the fear of being tedious, I have endeavour'd to Explain my self in the most just and simple Sense I am capable off; not only in averring what is strickly true; but in concealing many Circumstances which would Expose and Agravate.



The Author's C A S E.

IT was the latter End of *April*, or the Beginning of *May*, that the following Play through I know not what Impatience was given to Mr. *Chetwood*; (who I must acknowledge hath ever seem'd sensibly to resent its Ill-usage) In the same Month, it was read, approv'd off, and the Parts Cast by those in the Management; with a Promise of its being

The P R E F A C E. V

ing got up with the best Study and Care; secure in which, I never press'd its Performance, till they came of themselves to the Resolution of Playing it the 2d of *August*: What occasion'd its being longer Deferr'd, they best know; but on, or about the 24th of *July*, they came to my House, to adjust as they call'd it, the Time and Terms of Playing; and accordingly propos'd to stand the Chance of the House the first Night, provided I oblig'd my self to make Good the Deficiency's of the Second and Third: The whole Charge of which they reckon'd at 35 *l.* per Night: I could not but think this unreasonable, and Made my Objections: In short, our small Agreement that Day was, (*viz.*) That it should be Play'd the 20th of *August*; and upon Condition, I paid Them 12 *l.* They oblig'd themselves to Perform it three Nights certain; my Tickets and Orders, how numerous soever to be admitted, that or any other Night it was Perform'd: I gave my Note to that Purpose, and was so Honourable, or Easy rather, not to take theirs; --- Orders were given me to Print off my Tickets, and a Proof given me in what Nature to Print them. I did so, and by Vertue of my Agreement made Interest for it; when about a Week following, I was acquainted, That the Masters had given positive Orders for their not Playing longer then

[a]

the

vi *The* P R E F A C E.

the 16th, and that therefore they would lay a-side all other Business, and Play this as the 13th. --- By which I was at the Charge and Trouble of Re-informing my Friends, and Re-printing my Tickets. Thus was I lull'd on to the very Night before it should have been Play'd (*i. e.*) the 12th, when going at their Appointment with a Desire of seeing it Re-hears'd. I had a formal Excuse made me, That the Company had not Regularly attended the Rehearsals, and they began to be fearful they should not be capable of Playing it at all.

I express'd my self under some surprize at such Treatment, and that I could not help thinking it somewhat odd, that I should not till then know of this; I desir'd them to Consider, Exclusive the Charge and Trouble I had been at, That the Town had been in long and certain Expectation of it, and depended on its Performance the very next Day; and that it look'd like their Being at some Pains to make me Ridiculous: Upon this they promis'd to Play it on *Thursday*, and gave it out in their Bills, and the Publick Papers: On *Wednesday* Night they again change their Minds, and it could not be Play'd forsooth till *Friday*, and for that Day only, I was told, they having a positive Command to shut up the Doors on *Saturday*: Upon this I demanded the Play back, assuring Them, however, much a
Sub-

The P R E F A C E. vii

Subject of Laughter they had made me, I would not submit to its being Play'd upon such Terms ; To which they objected, that as they had been at some Pains and Charge to get it up, if I would comply to its being Play'd on *Friday*, they gave their Words it should be likewise Play'd on *Saturday*, but longer it was not in their Power upon any Conditions : Quite wearied out with Evasi- on and Delay, I complies herewith, and in great Condescention it was the next Day gi- ven out, with the stale Entertainment of *Acis* and *Galatea*, which had been the Drudge of the Season, and the inimitable Ditty of *in the Fields in Frost and Snow* : In short, the *Prologue* was spoke, and the Indulgence of the Audience desir'd, for a Gentleman's performing the principle Part, who had never appear'd upon the Stage before. (and which I believe might unfortunately be occasion'd by the Indisposition of Mr. *Bridgewater*) The Play follows, but how imperfect ? How awkward ? How absurd i sall ? the 1st, and 2d, Act, though ill express'd, was yet somewhat perfect, but the 3d, and 4th, so confus'd, irregular and unlike, as will with Difficulty be believ'd : They Playing about half of the 3d, and of the 4th, not above the 7th Part of it, and so injudicious and ill-cho- sen, as made the whole together Monstruous and Incoherent. Hereupon, I modestly ex-
[a 2] preft

viii *The* P R E F A C E.

prest my Concern, and told them I was in hopes they would be more careful of it the following Day; but alledging the Company incapable of performing it, they Positively refus'd to give it out again; in unjust Warmth, and from a true Spirit of *Quixotry* and *Mock-Power*. Thus have they in great Wantoness of Heart, Roasted a young *Cit* (as they Term it) to the everlasting Terrour of those, who shall take any other Diversion from their Business, than what the Bottle ordinarily affords. — Whether this be fair, or equitable Usage, is humbly submitted.

✍ N.B. But of a tenderness I bear to every Man's Character, and because I would not give Room for the least appearance for Injustice: I must inform the Reader, that Mr. Wilks, Junior, has since declar'd to me, That as he was not originally in the Management, so had it not been for him, the Audience would have been dismiss'd, and the Play not Play'd at all.

N.B. In a short time will be Publish'd a *Farce* of two Acts, call'd the *Historick, Satyrice, Triagy, Comick Humours of Exchange-Alley*, — By the same Author, — which he voluntarily gave to the said Company, and which was Acted several Times with great Applause.

F I N I S.



PROLOGUE.

AS Infant Birds their tender Pinions try,
Advance in Air, and make upon the Sky,
Fear and Ambition in their Turns divide,
Uncertain what the Great attempt betide :
Expos'd in this, their first and great Assay
To flattering Hopes, and fear of feather'd Prey ;
So our young AUTHOR comes upon the Stage,
And trusts to the good Nature of the Age ;
Boldly Adventuring out, at Nature's call,
Resolv'd like *Phaeton*, to fly or Fall.
He bids you welcome to the Worth he brings,
Th' Attempt deserves some Praise, and some he
Sings.

Speak of him, as to you he shall appear,
Nor judge him by th' unlucky time of Year ;
He lays His Claim to long establish'd Reason,
The Dainty's Greatest, when most out of Season.

The Fair will to his Subject sure be kind ;
The Fair, the lovely Object of his Mind :
For them to Night a light Distress he draws,
A fond frail Instance in her Sex's Cause,
Of Beauty, Wit, and strength of Pow'r misus'd,
False to her self, and by her Maid abus'd,
Gently to Satyr he the Subject lent,
And hath just punish'd her — to her Content.
Ladies a-while your kind Attention give ;
In ev'ry Good, O ! beauteous Circle live :
Learn from our Tale to Night, the Virgin's Care,
And by her Dangers warn'd, be Kind as Fair.
Possess'd at full with well-advis'd Applause,
To Pow'r give Licence, to that Licence Laws.

EPILOGUE.



EPILOGUE.

YOU see how very odly Things we carry ;
In Truth, 'twixt Jest and Earnest, most
Folks Marry :

A poor, weak, wilful Woman's here brought
under,
And stands Expos'd, condemn'd for Lawful
Plunder.

Doom'd to the Chimney-Corner during Life ;
A Passive, patient Household Thing, a Wife.
Spouse too, upon the Occasion's very Witty,
And Swears Mifs! now I have you — faith, I'll
fit ye.

Resolving by a sawcy Pow'r to abide,
And think's he's nought to do—but up and Ride;
But let him not presume too much on's Skill,
'Tis no such easie Matter—'gainst one's Will ;
I fear'd, and cause enough, I had to fear,
A Ship, and under Sail—the Lord knows where.
Very Gallant this way of making Matches,
I'll cure him—once I get him under Hatches ;
Convince him that to Woman kind belong,
A Member more unruly than her Tongue :
Doth he expect in a free-born Age like ours,
Implicit Faith, and uncontested Pow'rs,
Where all Degrees in joynt Good-nature scorn
Dispute of Liberty, to which they're born ;
When Churches shew the Bell in likeliest Graces,
And Masquerades are us'd to put off ugly Faces.
The Secret lies in looking most Demurely ;
We lose no Vertue if we Sin securely ;

Not

EPILOGUE.

Not meer Surmise can make an Action real,
We are not try'd to Old--by Fire Ordeal;
I was Filthily afraid of other Booty,
That Goods were run without the paying
Duty.

Finely I had been serv'd in such a Case,
Had he fell to — without the saying Grace:
Put up for every common Trader's Handle,
And made away — by common Inch of Candle:
But for my Comfort and eternal Ease,
I stand alike prepar'd, to Pain, or Please,
Happy in this one Circumstance of Life,
An *English* Husband, makes an *English* Wife.



Dramatis

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Meanwell,
Freelove,
Pert,
Blunt
Fropish,
Friendly,

Mr. Chapman,
Mr. Wilks, Inn.
Mr. Cibber, Jun.
Mr. Harper.
Mr. Evans.
Mr.

Servants, Mutes, Masques, &c.

W O M E N.

Cymæna,
Angelina,
Emilia.
Cælia,
Pruderia,
Beatrice,
Abigail,

Mrs. Tenoe.
Mrs. Bret.
Mrs. Linder.
Mrs. Davison.
Mrs. Willis.

SCENE Greenwich.

Dramatis



ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Cymena, and Abigail.

Cym.

Abigail!

Abi. Madam!

Cym. What a Clock is it Abigail?

Abi. Near upon Nine, Madam.

[Sighs.]

Cym. Why dost Sigh, Girl?

Abi. For that which hath been the breaking of many a Heart—loss of Liberty!

Cym. Am I become so Contemptible too, as to merit thy Pity?

Abi. You are, Madam, and as righteously deserve it, as any Woman within the Bills of Mortality: Is it not great Pity that a Lady of your Wit and Beauty, Figure, and Eminence,

B

should

2 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or,

should thus give up your self and Fortune, at the Pleasure of any Tyrant ! To Man, the worst Tyrants ! — It's strange Women will not be convinc'd, notwithstanding the many hourly Instances we have of that Sexes Insolence !

Cym. Mr. *Meanwell* is a Gentleman of Sense and Honour.

Abi. To a fair Purpose, to assume over your Judgment, and dispute your Inclinations ; your Man of Honour lies with his Friend's Wife ; your Man of Sense ridicules Religion : Honour and Sense imply Authority and Preheminence, and however once understood, mean nothing in reality, but Presumption, Impertinence, and Affront.

Cym. I wish I had thought more of it !

Abi. Consider Madam ! — how can it be reconcil'd, that a Woman of your Ladyship's Advantages, should so indifferently give up your Interest, in the polite, and the pleasurable ? To engage the Adoration of Men, and by Consequence, the Spite of Women, are Vertues in which you are very absolute ; you reign the Pride and Practice of a fine World, the Delight and Desire of the Bell-Esprit ; a thousand Graces adorn your Person, and an infinite deal of Perfections your Mind ; What then has possess'd you to make this ill use of your Power, that in the midst of Conquest you sue for Vassalage ?

Cym. It is somewhat mortifying truly.

Abi. Mortifying ! — so Young, so Beautiful, so Rich, and in your Senses, inconsiderately to give up your Person and Liberty at the Direction of any ill-natur'd Fellow in *England* ! — Look ye, Madam, the Injury be to your self ; this Freedom is well meant, and if you make a proper use of it, may yet redeem you.

Cym.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 3

Cym. What wouldst thou have me do? Thou know'st I have promis'd to Marry him this Morning.

Abi. Yes, as doth all the Town; your Weakness is the present Subject of all Conversation; my Lady *Busie* hath complemented the Court on't already, and from the City you receive the same Treatment! Monopolists in a State of Bankrupcy usually meet with---Contempt.

Cym. Awkward Things! [*in Disorder.*]

Abi. You already see the Effects of your rash Resolutions; the Gay, the Young, the Witty, have left your *Levee*, and are gone over to the fine Lady *Shapely's*—the Insolence of that haughty Beauty!—she hath for the Week past, been extravagant on the Comforts of Matrimony; says, I know not how many pert things on the Vanity of gadding, and the housewifely Comforts of loving Home; expects to be call'd at your crying out, forsooth, and would be God-mother, had she but Interest enough with you.

Cym. Provoking Creature!

Abi. Excuse me, Madam; what is there you would have, or what indeed that you have not? Will Marriage make you more amiable? Do you expect from it more Satisfaction, or more Content than you have at present? Is not the whole Creation yours; and do you not possess it, in as absolute a Degree, as independant and uncontroul'd, as a very plentiful Fortune can make you? — I find you are Concern'd, — there is yet Hopes; it can be yet no prejudice to delay this Affair a little.

Cym. And why was I not appriz'd of these Inconveniences before?

Abi. Because it is so very natural to us, not to apprehend Danger, till Ruin is at the Door.

4 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Cym. Some way must be thought of to deliver me from this Confusion—dear *Abigail!*—
Ah!

[*Shrieks seeing*

Meanwell Enter.

Mean. So *Hellen* look'd, and who could blame the Boy,

Who in so pure a Flame consum'd his *Troy*?

[*Waller.*

Abi. Unlucky Accident.

[*Aside.*

Mean. My gentle Maid, the Holy Right attend us;

The Reverend Priest is ready at the Altar,
To give me all I'd have on this side Heaven:
Let every Distance now be laid aside—

Why is that Blush, I must be more Familiar:
Come, come, why Sighs my Life?

Cym. I am not well to Day, and going into the Air may do me prejudice; I wou'd have it deferr'd a Day or two.

Mean. What new-fond Fit is this? fy, fy, my Dear!

Your Looks and your Complexion confess it a Deceit;

Speak you unartful, generous, well-inclin'd,
And fond of what you fear, Delight and Love!

Cym. I have had a very ill Night, am mighty feverish at present; hot, very hot; I am fitter for a Nursery than a Marriage-Bed.

[*Sighs.*

Mean. You will be better—I pray my Love consider!

The World's malicious, and will call you humorous,

And me a fond believing easie Fool:

A Lady, and sick of her Wedding-day! Vapours,
Nothing but Vapours—come, prithee, come.

Cym.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 5

Cym. Let them talk, I more affect their Spite,
than I fear their Censure; I know what the
Things wou'd have; but I shall not therefore
neglect my Health, because they would be
pleas'd to know that I did so.

Mean. Why, Madam—

Cym. Pray, Sir, be more reasonable, and en-
deavour not to persuade me from my Senses;
in plain Terms I am not a little disorder'd, and
my Resolution is, I will not be seen abroad to-
Day.

Mea. How very a Fool you make of me;
'Sdeath, that I shou'd doat so on this Woman!
Ungenerous Maid! perfidious and ungrateful!
Why wilt thou trifle with my Passion thus?
Provoke me to upbraid thee with thy falshood,
And make me wish to hate thee! I've a Soul
Susceptible of Injury and Wrong,
And dare resent them;—yes I dare, young
Woman!

Believe not thy vain Nature, it may deceive
thee;

I'm not perhaps that Property you think me:
There's more Women,—Women as fair too—
Less fond on't I am sure.

Cym. It's very possible, Sir, *Abigail*— [*going.*]

Mea. Nay, you shall hear me!

Have I not lov'd thee, faithless as thou art,
Beyond my Ease; my Interest, or Repute?
Hast thou not, fordid Woman, own'd my Passion,
Abus'd, and trick'd me, like a very Jilt?
Long have I born thy little perverse Humours?
Passive, and unreprouch'd, beheld the use,
The Thing you'd make of me:—still must I
see it,

And shall I not resent the unrighteous Usage?

Cym. Nay, if you Rave,

[*going again.*]

Mean.

6 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or,

Mean. Dear, dear *Cymana*, prithee don't distract me ;

Behold to what Obedience I'm reduc'd ! (*Kneels.*
Remember the Excuse my Offence carries with it
Heat of Desire, and Rashness of my Love,
Gives Jealousy, Impatience, and Disease : —
How long have you been ill ? -- you've taken cold,
Forgive me, gentle fair One ---- you must forgive me —

You are not well — Indeed I cou'd not think it,
You will be better after you have rested :
When will you bless me ! -- Shall it be to-Morrow ?

Cym. I can't tell — I know not how it may
be with me -- but if I have Health and Strength---
Your Arm, *Abigail* — [*Exeunt Cym. Abig.*]

Mean. And Humour — Confusion !

Enter Freelove humming a Minuit and Dancing.

Free. Well, *Ned*, where's the Company and
the Musick ? I hope by this time the Ceremo-
ny is over ; for to tell thee the Truth, I had not
Courage enough to attend thee to the Place of
Execution.

Mea. You need be under no great Care about
that, for by great Mercy we are under a Re-
prieve.

Free. Ha ! what Whim now ? she hath not
again deceiv'd thee Sure ?

Mea. Indeed she hath.

Free. Ha, ha, the more Coxcomb thou ! — will
you never be convinc'd ? take my Advice, and if
ever you hope to succeed, have less Love and more
discretion ; I have one Quality my self not un-
worthy Imitation, that is, my Indifference ;
who will not be confin'd to either of the Sex, but
would willingly engross all of them ; will ne-
ver doat on the finest Woman in *Europe*, yet can
say

ACQUET at Her Wit's Ends. 7

say civil Things to the ugliest Face in Christendom.

Mea. Thou art very happy.

Free. As you may be, if you will, be but less fond of her in private; less particular with her, when in publick; Salute this *Belle*, Whisper a second, Kneel to a third; say, and do any thing to amuse and delight the Circle, and meet her Resentment with Gaiety, and Presence.

Mea. What have I not done to oblige early and late; with what pain, with what price, trouble and assiduity, have I sought her Love! that any Woman can be so ungrateful!

Free. Why there's the mischief—you cannot love without languishing, nor express a Sense you have of a Lady's Charms by other Methods, than by Sighing, and making ill Faces; you are concern'd for her Conduct to Impertinence, are curious to know where she goes, what Company she meets there, and how she behaves to them; then you will upbraid her for Coldness, her neglect of you, and regarding other People, and if by a hard Word, or unkind Look, she resents your little Jealousy, you hang your Ears like the Picture of Ill-Luck, and must purchase your Peace at any Rate—Once more let me advise—Approach her with less Awe, treat her with less Cost, and watch her with less Care; and if thou dost not gain her, I'll be content to be posted for my Ignorance—*Angelina* is arriv'd in Town,

Mea. Thou hast us'd that Lady very barbarously.

Free. Why, faith, had I been inclin'd to Marry, she had been the only Woman living I thou'd have chosen; but avowedly, and openly
to

8 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

to carry on her Designs upon my Person and Liberty, of which thou knowest I am not a little jealous, put me upon prudently avoiding a Distemper which in time might be infectious.

Mean. Nay, but you have been very un sincere to her.

Free. Rather she has been to blame for being too credulous: For me to persuade a Woman she is very Beautiful, Witty, and the like, are general Civilities, which are expected from us by the whole Sex; that's a disagreeable Face indeed, of which I can say nothing favourable; not that it is regarded as sincere, but as Complaisance and Gaiety from a well-bred Man.

Mean. The World aggravates your Inconstancy, and believes, notwithstanding your Reserve, and her fine Sense, she and you have been in the dark together.

Free. It is a malicious lying World; she is as beauteous as a Cherubim, and as chaste as a Vestal; her Vertue is easy, unaffected, and without Distrust; and her Gaiety of Behaviour, arises purely from a sweetness of Temper, and simplicity of Manners in her: — Yes, it was this damn'd meddling Town's doings, which brought this dear amiable Woman into Jeopardy, and me to Contrition; — you have heard the Story?

Mea. Somewhat imperfectly.

Free. I convers'd with that Lady, Ned, for several Months, and had for her a Value above the rest of her Sex, she being distinguish'd for her Beauty, Breeding, good Humour, and uncommon Sense: My unusual Assiduity became the neighbouring Table-talk, and the Town (as naturally complaisant) gave us for Man and
Wife;

9 *A COQUET at Her Wit's End.*

Wife ; if I went abroad, I was observed beyond all Patience ; if I staid at Home, methought I was look'd upon as a queer Fellow, and one fit for no Christian Company, but a Wife's : — Sleeping, or waking, I was tormented with one Emblem or another of the Slavery I was running into : — In short, I took the Affair into serious Consideration, and from a natural aversion I ever had to Captivity, gave it for Liberty.

Mea. And so left the Lady.

Free. And thou can'st not think with how much Regret ; but Converse with her I did not as usual, and the World cou'd see so far into the Occasion of it, that it cou'd be little for mine, or her Credit forsooth ; Precedents were easily found of my Inconstancy, and some few Circumstances maliciously remembred ; whereby our former familiarities were accounted Criminal : Say, or do what I cou'd, it avail'd nothing : They were too fond of the Scandal easily to be dispossess'd of it ; and poor *Angelina* by a certain Consequence (you may suppose) had a very considerable Share in the Infamy.

Mea. Ungenerous Creatures !

Free. You will believe how a Woman of her Spirit, and Temper, receiv'd the Aspersions ; all confounded, enrag'd at their Malice, and my Perfidy ; she gave one, who had long address'd her without Encouragement the Advantage, Marry'd, curs'd me and the World, and retir'd from us.

Mea. To an old jealous, ill-natur'd Fellow I have heard ; to one whom Beauty, Wit, nor her amiable Temper can in the least soften.

Free. He is so ; the more is her Misfortune, and my Shame : — But here comes *Friendly*—

10 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

he hath been so kind to disguise himself as you see, to deliver me a Letter to her.

Enter Friendly disguis'd like a Footman.

Dear Jack! — well what News? [*Company enter and talk a part with Meanwell.*]

Well, and what then? — she will be at home in the Evening, will she? and the Coast quite clear? — her Husband did not see you, I hope.

Frien. No, no.

Free. And you delivered my Letter to her own Hands, did you?

Frien. I did, I did.

Free. Well, but prethee tell me; How look't she? what said she? what did she? How the Pox can you be so malicious?

Frien. There. [*Gives a Letter.*]

Free. A Letter! — ten Thousand blessings light on thee for it! [*Impatiently.*] the old Puppy was abroad, he! — is she not grown very handsome? — did you not observe an uncommon pleasure in her Eyes? — Was not she?

Frien. Read, read.

Free. Ha! my own Letter inclosed! — she receiv'd it Sure?

Frien. Yes, and read it with the Contempt you, in my Judgment, deserve of her.

Free. Psha! prithee, don't trifle with me; it cannot be.

Frien. As sure as you live; she bid me tell you too, she admires at your Insolence in it; and were she assured, she said, your humble Servant had any previous knowledge of the Contents, I had undergone the Strapado — a Pox Intrigue you, say I. [*Exit.*]

Free.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. II

Free. Well, but *Jack*. — I must after him,
Flame, fire, and Confusion! [*Exit hastily after him.*]

Enter Pert.

Pert. So there he is, as full of his disappointment, as his Love and ill usage can make him---
I must rally him.

Mean. I am oblig'd to you, this is kind of
you. — [*Company Exeunt.*] This Fop here —
[*Aside.*]

Pert. Joy to you, *Ned*; much Joy to thee —
What, the Job's done, I am to late for the Ceremony I suppose, He?

Mea. By full two Hours, Sir; Lovers are naturally impatient, and their Desires too violent to admit Delays.

Pert. Why, faith, I had been earlier, but that I thought it not altogether so convenient; really she is a good sort of a Girl, and a Man may be as happy with her, as he can be suppos'd to be with any one Woman. But I have no Notion of Matrimony, never could be perswaded into any good Thoughts of it; otherwise she had once some little Kindness for me, I believe — only, as one Relation might have for another, gad consider me! — not but the World will talk.

Mea. Never, that I have heard.

Pert. Yes, yes, it hath been said, that — but no matter, the Age is censorious, and will not bear being contradicted: Where is she tho? — I wish you much Joy with all my Soul---Faith, I do.

Mean. Why, she, she---is not within--- [*aside.*]
this Coxcomb will tell it every Body — I shall be the Jest of the whole Town.

12 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Pert. Ha, ha! not within! that's a good Jest indeed--nay, nay, I must congratulate with her—Jealous by this Light! [*Aside.*

Mean. No, but she, she--is not very well, and would see no Company.

Pert. Gad consider me! not well on her Wedding day! Come, come, it's impossible; it works rarely, faith— [*Aside.*

Mean. Besides, she, is busy, she is not dress'd—she, she's—

Pert. Gad's Curse! why, I was sent for, Man; was desir'd to come away immediately; she has some Business of Importance with me, and all that—

Mean. It's a Lye, Sir

Pert. Sir!—I must not provoke him further— [*Aside.*]—why, *Ned*, thou art not angry; Dost thou suppose me such an Infidel now, as that I wou'd wrong thee, admitting I had really an Opportunity; Formerly, I can't say indeed, but I may have taken a few Familiarities, or so, with her, but now she is my Friend's Wife--mind him— [*Aside.*]---her Kisses would be as insipid to me, as my Sister's: The De'l trust me if I am that Man the World reports me—not I faith—I have the Honour of being not a little well with the Ladies; that's granted—but it's the Devil and all to say, (as some will) that I lie with every one I converse with.

Mean. Damn'd, impudent Rascal! but I am to blame— [*Aside.*]—no, not you, you deny but every thing: What is her Name that play'd at *Ombre* with you the other Night?—you forgot that too, I warrant—your kind Glances, and the pressing of Knees beneath the Table were observ'd, whether you know it or

no—

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 13

no--if I can but divert myself with the Fool
now —

[*Aside.*

Pert. Who's that, Madam Springly?

Mean. The same.

Pert. Or my Lady Saunter—or a certain
Dutchess, perhaps, or the Marchioness of —

Mean. Yes, yes, a fine Lady, a very fine
Lady!

Pert. Why, yes faith, the Woman's well e-
nough, Infirmities she hath like other Women;
it is a little ungenerous in me to report it in-
deed — not that I know any thing more of her,
than that she hath not the sweetest Breath;
Gad consider me!

Mean. I dare swear thou dost not — which
of these Ladies is this Fool describing? [*Aside.*

Pert. Nay, no Swearing neither, *Ned*, there
are People d'ye see, very positive, that I am
specially well in her Favour--they are mistaken
indeed! I have lately no relish of Adultery;
some late Prosecutions have convinc'd me of its
Sinfulness, more than all the Parson's Preach-
ing — they have got some malicious Circum-
stances by the End, it is true---of a still Night,
a Garden, a Surprise—and the Devil and all.
But admitting it, must I certainly know her,
because we were taken Arm in Arm together?
And cannot I take the Liberty of a civil Salute,
without being presum'd to have the last Fa-
vour?

Mean. Certainly.

Pert. Let me alone for an Affair of that Na-
ture; I have more Discretion than that comes
to; I don't use to tell; I hate, above all things,
the Fellow that is vain: A certain Lady, for
Instance, that shall be nameless, does me the
Honour of a Visit sometimes, and modestly
speaking,

14 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

speaking, I believe, thinks me not altogether unworthy her Esteem; every Body, but myself sees it; every Body but myself, says it; and yet I am not sensible of the Honour they do me in it, I am so very modest a Puppy.

Mean. She is not very Tempting then, I presume.

Pert. Yes, Faith, she hath a charming Face, an infinite deal of Wit, a little inclin'd to be Fat, scarce Eighteen, and married to an old Knight, whom any Body but myself would be proud to Cuckold—but every Man that lives in the World, will have many Affairs of that Nature on his Hands.

Mean. I shou'd know her, I believe.

Pert. No, no, Sir---she is not to be known.

Mean. Is it not—hark in your Ear [*Whisp.*

Pert. No, Gad consider me! is that known too? Well, it is to no purpose to endeavour concealing things of this Nature I find; No, no, this Lady I am talking of, is a Maiden, a pure Virgin, by this Light.

Mean. I thought you said she was married,

Pert. He! did I? why—why—

Mean. You are concern'd with so many, it distracts you.

Pert. Ah! you are an unlucky Rogue, *Ned*, (*hugs him*)—but here comes *Blunt*! what an ungainly Creature it is! I smell him hither; Pray Heaven he brings no Diseases among us!

Mean. That Booby here too! [*Aside.*] he hath a pretty Sister, that you are great with too, I understand.

Pert. How the Pox d'ye hear these Things? I vow I can't imagine that—I don't indeed deny, but—

Mean.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 15

Mean. You have lain with her !

Pert. That's a good Jest ! do you think I wou'd tell you now ? — no, if I do, may she never —

Mean. Do you the Favour again — he —

Pert. Nay, faith, this is ungenerous, *Ned*, ha, ha, ha.

Enter Blunt.

Blunt. What now, who is it you draw your Teeth upon ? What a Pox d' you Sneer at ?

Mean. An Intrigue of this sly Rogues with a Woman of Quality only. —

Pert. Nay, prethee now. —

Blu. He intrigue !

Mean, Wee'l banter the Brute — [*Aside to Pert.*] — This Amour is no Secret ; I have heard it at *White's*, at *Wills*, and half the Tea Tables in Town : The Rogue hath so much of her blind Side, Sir, he will tell every Mole she has in her Body, if he pleases, that's all.

Pert. Thou art the sadest Fellow, ha, ha.

Blu. Well, damn your Quality, and your Intrigues, I have business with *Cymana*. [*Going.*

Mean. I must prevent you tho' [*Aside, pulls him back.*] — The Dog, Sir, hath so much subtlety in these Affairs, that he's as secret as the Night, and so very insincere he is reserv'd, even to his Friends — I wonder what Methods he makes use of to succeed so with that Sex ; and yet, if he would be plain now, I dare swear, he hath been in her Bed-Chamber twice this Week, notwithstanding her Brother Sleeps not three Yards from her — now be ingenious. — Did you not lye with her last Night ?

Pert. Nay, damme, if I tell you — this is diverting, faith. [*Aside.*

Blu.

16 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or

Blu. 'Sblood! let me go, will you?

Mean. [*Still holding him.*] And then his Talent of Raillery is admirable; next to his debauching of the Girl, his chief excellence is in making a Fool of the Brother; little doth that Coxcomb think the Honour that is done him in it; a Pox of all Fools, say I, every body but himself, observes how indecent their Familiarities are, and yet he sees it not: The Rogue hath got of the weak side of him, and by that advantage, taken great freedom; and with more than one of the Family, or he is devilishly belly'd.

Blu. What a Plague d'ye trouble me with it for? — rot ye all for me — will you let me go or no?

Pert. Ha, ha, very good, Gad consider me! — nay, now you are too Satyrical Faith.

Mean. Don't I know that? — —

Pert. Why, it's possible you may know, that I have for a considerable time past us'd her House, where a great deal of mixt Company meet; That we have exchang'd a thousand *Doux-oux*, and said as many kind things to one another: But, what a Pox! dost think I so little respect my Constitution, as to have to do with all that I say civil things too? that's a good Jest, ha, ha, ha.

Blu. Ha, ha, [*Mocking him.*] well, who the Devil is this, ha!

Mean. A Miracle! She hath the sweetest Lips, the charming'st Complexion, the finest Eye, the best Features, the beautifulest Chest, and the ———

Pert. Most obliging Temper in the universe, Gad sink me!

Mean. Such a Beauty:

Fert.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 17

Pert. Such a Goddess!

Mean. Such an Angel!

Pert. Such an Armful!

Mean. And such a Whore, is —

Blunt. Who? — rot ye both, Who?

Mean. Hark in your Ear — your Sister.

Pert. O the Devil!

[*Aside.*

Blunt. My Sister!

Mean. Your Sister, Mrs. *Martha*, *Blunt*! —

if he is to be believ'd, you may reckon upon having a young Nephew this time nine Months.

Blunt. Why, Villain, Rascal Dog! [*beats Pert off.*

Pert. Gad consider me! I vow and swear! —

Mean. I think I am pretty even with the Rascal; I must follow and secure the Door, or shall be plagu'd with more of their Impertinence;

No more shall Sense and Virtue Woman please,
Whose chief Delight's in worthless Things like
these. [*Exit.*

A C T II.

SCENE *Fropish's House.*

Enter Free Love, Beatrice, and Fropish at a Distance.

Free. NO more Doubts, good *Beatrice*; find me out a convenience of speaking to her, and if I do not reconcile myself, and thee, to thy Mistress for it —

Beat. Well, go in, and if I do lose my Place!

D

Free.

18 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Free. I will give thee a Pension--Peace, I say.

Frop. Will you so, Mr. Dog? [*Aside.*

Free. Be careful, we are not Surpriz'd'd'ye hear?

Beat. Mind you your own Business, and let me alone to secure you from the impertinent Jealousie of the old Cuckold; make us thankful for't, he is gone to *London* to day; and may his Extortion damn him, the Plague take him, or the Bridge sink with him, so I see him no more. [*Puts him in a Closet, and Exit.*

Frop. Um! here's a rare Jade! I shall alter your Tone, or I am plaguily mistaken, Huffy---he is gone to *London*!---that pretence of mine was lucky enough;---I'll go down, lock up all my Doors, and call up all my Servants, and by that time, my very vertuous Spouse and her Spark may understand one another it is likely;---I was Jealous without Cause, forsooth! an old, doating, suspicious Fool, I---and she was chaff, she was discreet---she was prudent---and so very courteous a Lady!---a Pox of her Humility. [*Exit hastily.*

Enter Abigail and Beatrice, meeting.

Abi. Dear *Beatrice*, welcome to *Greenwich*!

Beat. Thank you, good Sister *Sentry*; well, how goes the trade of Love on, in this lewd wicked Town?

Abi. As usual; Money, and Assurance, Flutter, and Impertinence, carry all before them still; so that between my Mistress and her Servants, their Pique and Pleasure, change of Humour, and change of Fashions, I make a shift to glean a comfortable Subsistence still, thank a happy Turn for it.

Beat. Your Mistress is not yet marry'd then.

Abi.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 19

Abi. Yours is, I understand, with a Witness.

Beat. Ah, poor Lady, Heaven help her! she is marry'd — what, you have no thoughts of it neither, I warrant!

Abi. Never, till I can mend myself, Child; if a Woman's Resolutions are to be regarded.

Beat. Come, come, Girl, you will repent this one Day; a little of that Same would be no prejudice to your, or my Complexion, as I take it: Shall I recommend you a Spark? Thank you, Child, I have one to spare, and was just thinking to make you the same kind Offer.

Beat. Who, and what is he? — He hath Money I hope.

Abi. O! very Rich.

Beat. Let me see him, dear *Abigail*; and if I refuse him, may I be possess'd with I know not what Desire, and find no Relief, till he again give me the asking!

Abi. Spoke with the true Spirit of a Chambermaid! You must know then, that — but your Mistress is coming this way, and will prevent us, step into the next Room, and I'll tell you. [Exeunt.]

Enter Angelina, with a Book in her Hand.

Ang. How hard it is to overcome ourselves, to mortify, and to be the Thing we would be, 'Gainst strong Desires, and violent Prepossession! O! *Freelove*, thou hast quite destroy'd my Peace! [reads.]

Fated to shun what most my Soul desires,
And awe the Passion Prejudice inspires:
Ah! how shall I behave in such a Part
Without a tender treacherous Swain. —
Free. Within a treach'rous Heart.

20 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Enter Freelove, and takes Angelina in his Arms.

Ang. Your Impudence amazes me!

[breaks from him.]

Free. Your Beauty charms me.

Ang. How with any Countenance, can you look me in the Face?

Free. How with any Conscience, can you dispute me the Favour?

Ang. How came you in?

Free. I know not.

Ang. Hath my Maid done this?

Free. I know not that neither. *[pulls her.]*

Ang. Art not thou the most perjur'd of Men?

Free. Thou shalt know within — that thou art the most agreeable of Women, is our present Purpose: Moments are too precious to be lost; the Time, the Place, thy Husband's absence, all give me an Opportunity of convincing thee, that I am the most passionate, if you will —

Ang. Stand off! — O! that I had but as much Inclination, as I have Reason to hate thee!

Free. Prithee, don't trifle with the Man that Loves thee.

Nor look with distant Eyes on one so near:

The time hath been, I have been dearer to thee,

Light to thy Sight, and Pleasure to thy Soul:

Whence then this sudden Strangeness — Come, be kind.

Ang. Can you upbraid me too, ungrateful Man?

Yes, but I know too well my guilty Weakness,

Know, I've been easy, as thou'rt perfidious:

That I believ'd you just, when unabus'd,

Sigh'd, Sicken'd, and grew Foolish, is no Secret,

But yet, that thou shouldst glory in thy Shame,

Value thy self in giving me Misfortunes,

And

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 21

And triumph in the little Pride of ruining
A Maid, whose fault was in believing fondly,
Is an ill Principle I want a Name for.
Will you remember how unkind you've us'd me?
Thy faithless fatal Promises, thy Vows,
And all those Arts you prov'd for to undo me?
Thank Heaven, I kept my Vertue unsubdued
Against thy foul Advances; yet my Heart,
My credulous believing, easy Heart
Receiv'd the soft Impression; thought thee true,
Fair as thy Words, and kind like thy Pretences;
But, Oh! when I perceived your wicked purpose,
The Monster's meaning, and his Lust's intent,
Look'd thro' the little Fallacies of Man——
Saw promis'd Marriage, and eternal Truth.
All lost in impious, insolent Presumption;
When I perceiv'd the World made wanton with me,
I curs'd my self, and thee, and all the World,
And in the violence of the disorder
I did, I know not what I did —— I marry'd.

Free. And to an old, jealous, impotent, ill-natur'd Fellow, without so much as one good Quality in him; it is really pittiful; but you should be cautious how you let Passion overcome you, Child; prethee, come in a little —— I am satisfy'd I have been to blame, and will make my Charmer all the Compensation I am capable of.

Ang. Insolent Villain, will you still pursue me? Still tempt my Vertue, try the softest Arts, And urge an easy Women to pollution? Monster, avaunt! I am not to be us'd thus: Whatever else he is, he is my Husband, My ever honour'd Lord, and when I wrong him, Break thro' the Ties of Honour and Religion, And e're consent to any thing so impious, As Breach of what so solemnly I've promis'd May Heaven —— Villain!

Free.

22 *The Impertinent LOVERS: Or,*

Free. Nay, I must prevent rash Vows. —

[Kisses her eagerly.]

Enter Froppish, several Servants following.

Frop. Come along, come along — ha! what do I see? — seize him — I'll cool your Courage, I warrant you, young Man. — *[Whets his Knife.]*

Ang. My Husband here! *[Aside.]* I am mighty glad you are come, my Dear, this Insolent Fellow here would have been rude to me else.

Frop. No, he cou' not be so barbarous sure; Poor Dearee, was in danger of being ravish'd? How providential was my coming at this time! This is a pure Contrivance of your Maids, I'll hold my Life on't: You knew nothing of this Man's being here, I warrant; never saw the Fellow before in your life, did you? ha!

Ang. The Gentleman I have seen before; but how, or which way he came here now, I know not.

Frop. No, not you, poor Innocent! — well, don't be surpriz'd — you meant no harm, I believe you did not; good Woman, you was otherwise employ'd I find, in your Clofet, and at your Devotions. — An impudent Rogue to break in upon a Lady in her Retirement thus — a good Book, a very good Book truly; a Man would be a Brute to believe any ill of one so Spiritually inclin'd.

Ang. I never wrong'd you; why will you use me thus?

Frop. Use thee ill! Heaven forbid it! what tho' you did design to make a Monster of me, and this very honest Gentleman was so charitable as to assist you in it, and what then? it is no more than what our Betters have done before us; and where

A COQUET at Her Wits Ends. 23

where is the harm of it? — poor tender Thing, how it weeps! real Tears as I live! — well do not grieve your self; be not concern'd thus; who can help Misfortunes? you know! I am as credulous an old Fool, as a Woman cou'd wish to play upon — be comforted, I say; Come, sit down a little, and thou shalt see me do thee Justice upon his Body, for his designs upon thine; I'll spoil him for a Ravisher. — [*Whets his Knife again.*

Ang. You will not murder him, I hope?

Frop. No, no, I'll only qualify him for the Opera, that's all — Sit, I say — the Operation will be over immediately.

Free. Blood, and Thunder! [*Struggles with the Servants.*]

Ang. My Love's not Serious?

Frop. As ever I was in my Life, my Dear.

Ang. Consider, how much you will offend against the Law.

Frop. I am sure it is the best Method of fulfilling the Gospel.

Ang. My Life thinks me Vertuous.

Frop. Yes, yes, vertuous as any one of the Sex — who want Opportunities of being otherwise.

Ang. I must not give your violent Temper way.

Frop. Why will you use me thus? if e'er I wrong'd you.

If my unchast Soul admits of other Comfort,
Than what's consistent with my Husband's Honour,

May Heaven abandon me to Shame, and Sorrow.

Frop. Impudence! all this shall not Save your Minion; Come, prepare there, I'll teach you to break in upon your Neighbour's Property again.

Enter

24 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Enter Emilia, as frightened

Emil. O Sir!

Frop. Well, what's the matter now? — what a Pox do you want? — have you any Petition to offer in this Fellow's favour? — are you under any Concern for the Bauble too, ha?

Emil. As I was sitting in the Parlour, Sir, a Gentleman threw up the Sash, and leap'd in, and upon my leaving the Room, is coming up Stairs after me.

Frop. Wounds! the Insolence of these young Dogs! will neither Locks, Bolts, nor Bars, prevent their Impertinence? — at this rate there will be no living — carry him into the next Room a while.

[*Freelove Exit, forced off.*]

Enter Pert.

Pert. Your Servant, Mr. *Fropish*, — your most humble Servant, Ladies; why do you lock your selves up thus? your Friends will not excuse you, — Pray, how do you do? — when came you to Town? — methinks, Madam, you look but indifferent; I fear Matrimony doth not agree with you. — Is not your Lady well, Mr. *Fropish*? — I'll banter the old Prig — the Lady's inviting me in at the Window, must have a kind meaning in't. [Aside.]

Frop. Your's, kind Sir, your's heartily — we lock our selves up to avoid your Impertinence, if you must know; and whether our Friends approve or disapprove it, we do not in plain Terms reckon you of that Number — how we do, doth not concern you, that I know, nor yet when we came to Town — so far you are answer'd —
for

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 25

for my Wife, Sir — She is in health, I dare say ; doth she look like a Woman that will not make use of an Opportunity when it offers ? —

Pert. Jealous ! stark jealous ! I must Cuckold the Puppy, Gad consider me ! [*Aside.*] but why are you not dress'd, Ladies ? are you not for the Masque to Night. I have a Set of the prettiest Dresses imaginable at your Ladyship's Service, what do you think I design for my self ?

Emil. I don't know — What pray ?

Pert. Ha, ha, I shall burst with Pleasure — You must know, Ladies, I have ever had a damn'd Antipathy against the Priests, Gad, consider me ! if they are not the most imposing Rascals living ; I recommended one of them to a Vicaridge but the other Day ; and the ingrateful Whelp hath since had the Impudence to threaten me with the Spiritual-Court, for a little simple Fornication, only with a Neighbour's Daughter.

Emil. Ungrateful indeed ! — but your Dress, Sir ?

Pert. O ! ay, I think I am reveng'd to the purpose ; as I was saying — I shall appear in a precise Parson's Habit, with the Appendix of Asses Ears, and a Slobbering-bib, — Ha, ha, ha.

Emil. Admirable, ha, ha, — Coxcomb. [*Aside.*

Pert. Have you been abroad yet, Ladies ? — You have heard the Story of my Lord Modish, and the Lady Betty Loveit, I suppose — Gad sink me ! Who wou'd have thought that *Prude* cou'd have other Notion of distinction of Sex, but by their difference in Habit ?

Emil. Is it true ?

Pert. True ! — Why, all the Town talks of it — I'll tell you how far it is true — Mr. —

26 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Frop. And is this all the Business you have, Sir?

Pert. Yes, Sir.

Frop. Then there's the way down — I have Business of Importance upon my Hands, and will not be interrupted — Away, I say.

Pert. But, good Mr. *Fropish*! — Nay, but this is uncivil — you will not turn me out, I am sure.

Frop. Certainly! — As I will every Fellow of your Turn — Well —

Servants return, and talke a-part with Frop.

Ang. We should be glad of your Company, Sir, Age hath its Humours.

Emil. It's my Father's Temper, Sir; Pray stay.

Pert. Both in Love with me, by this Light.

[*Aside.*

Ang. I am perswaded you have Goodness enough to excuse it.

Pert. Dear, and undutiful!

Emil. I hope, Sir, you have more Sense than to regard it.

Pert. Gad a mercy, Disobedience! — Well, Ladies, to shew you the Passion I have for you — I have really at this time — ha!

Frop. From the Balcony, say you? — while you went into the next Room — Sots! Knaves! Villains!

[*Beats out the Servants.*

You, Madam, to your Chamber — [*to his Wife.*
You, Mrs. *Flirt*, to your Dirt Pies, (*to his Daughter.*) — I'll be reveng'd still. [*thrusts 'em out differently.*

Pert. Ha! What is all this! — What now?

Frop. Why now, thou art the most silly, Senseless, impertinent, pragmatistical, empty, insignificant, worthless Jackanapes, that ever Snuff, or Sweet-Powder was bestow'd on. [*Exit hastily.*

Pert.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 27

Pert. Why what the Devil is the meaning of all this? — They are certainly both smitten with me — Pox of this Jealous, old Fellow; I wish he was well in the Pillory with his Horns on.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Madam Cymana's Maid is below, and would speak with you.

Pert. I come.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Fropish, pushing in Beatrice.

Frop. Go, Mrs. Utenfil, march off with your stale Ware; you have a Head excellently turn'd for Iniquity, and cannot fail to make a Maintenance of it in this damn'd lewd Age.--[*Exeunt Bea.*

Enter a Servant.

Well, what want you?

Serv. Sir Roger Moreland hath sent, Sir, and desires to see you immediately, to discharge his Mortgage; he goes out of Town in an Hour's time, he says.

Frop. This is so unlucky—take you care of the House, d'ye hear? and let no Soul in or out, on my displeasure? I'll be back immediately.

[*Exit.*

Enter Emilia, and Freelove.

Emil. Nay, nay, you have no time for Apologies.

Free. But one Moment, my dear Life.

Emil. My Father will return.

28 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Free. Take but my Thanks, my Deliverer ; how can I be able to make you a Return ?

Emil. By being careful not to transgress a second time ; you have your Liberty again, see that you don't abuse it.

Free. I must not part with you so ; I am not so clear of Danger as you may imagine — Mercy on me ! I have all the Symptoms of high Love, my Heart beats, my Tongue falters, and my Blood turns cool again, and if, after all your Kindness, you take no further Compassion upon me, you have but reserv'd me for a greater Misery.

Emil. Heaven forbid — you are not in Love, I hope.

Free. Most passionately, and with my Benefactor — Oh ! if you have any pity, look kindly on me ; do not fly the Man who Loves, and who Adores you : I find I know not how many tender things in my Heart in your favour ; Encourage the fond Emotion ; gently it asks Comfort, and that you will be kind.

Emil. A Qualm only ; it will be soon be over again ; the next she removes it effectually — I doubt you are in a bad way — how pale and wan you look ! — have you no Cough, nor any uneasiness in breathing ? Pray, how do you find your Stomach ? how is your pulse ? feverish, as I live ! poor Fellow, he looks as if he had fretted himself to fiddle-strings, and would make very good Musick, I fancy, being well plaid upon ; ha, ha.

Free. Am I become ridiculous, Madam, I verily believe I am so ; all of a sudden I am beset with flavish Symptoms, and am of as passive Principles as you can wish for ; use me as you please ; marry me, and I will become as obedient

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 29

ent a Beast of Burden, as ever Yoke was put upon.

Emil. And are you caught at last? for shame, Man, take courage, and put a better face upon the matter — Good Lord! what a Visage is there? — how very silly you look? — You must excuse me, I can't forbear laughing for the Life of me: I was thinking of the fable of the Candle and rash Butterfly, who after long Sporting with the flame, burnt his wings: Ha, ha, ha.

Free. I am pleas'd to see you so chearful, Madam; pleas'd that I can make you so: Continue to be as happy as I can wish you, and you will be as happy as you deserve to be: Yes, Madam, I am cool, and in my Senses, my Spirits are no longer in flutter, you are to me what is most exquisite to Sense, and I am persuaded you will ever be so.

Emil. Is your name *Freelove*, pray? and is it with that same solemn water-gruel Complexion of yours, you have been so mischievous? Um! — Are you really the Gentleman so famous for succeeding with our Sex; who takes up his Passions at pleasure, and shifts them with every clean Shirt? I must be mistaken in my Man sure; it is impossible that any thing which looks so wretched, and pitiful, should Triumph. — I expected a raking, roaring, impudent, young Fellow; whom it wou'd be impossible for a Woman with Inclinations about her, to resist; from hence I Lov'd the Gay, unlucky Image I had conceiv'd of you; and had you made upon this weak Side, Heaven knows what wou'd have become of me: But I find I am in an Errour; you are a harmless, tame Animal, whose Excellence lies in fine Legs, and soft Speeches.

Free.

30 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Free. How prettily every thing you do, becomes you! I admire those Lips most when set in Smiles; and for harbouring the wittiest Tongue that ever was; when your Eyes are fill'd with pleasure, they most affect me; and if any thing can be added to your whole Person, it is the happy manner you have of engaging by it. — Come, be kind, this Relish of Life will go off, and be no more: I am sick of Change, weary of being wild; take me but to your Arms, and I will be as much yours, as it is possible for one, who knows he cannot be happy in being any others. [Knocking.

Emil. Bless me! my Father again! — why have we delay'd thus! get you at the back Door into the Garden; quick.

Free. You will promise to follow me then, for I must not part with you so?

Emil. Well, I do, I will; fly.

Free. In the Grove on the South Side.

Emil. Ay, ay, go, I say.

Free. You will not make it long?

Emil. No, no, the duce is in the Man I believe. [Pushes him out.

[Enter Fropish.

Frop. What now! how comes this, Miss? was not my Order absolute, that you should not stir from out the back Parlour, he? — Mercy on us! what will this World come to, that a young Girl of eighteen should be so full of the Sin of Disobedience: — In, I say — what d'ye mutter?

Emil. I hope I shall make better use of the Education you have given me — I abhor the thoughts on't. —

Frop.

ACOQUET at Her Wit's End. 31

Frop. Yes, yes, no doubt of it, very obedient you: But I am not so old a Fool yet, as to be noodled so; I am not to be taken with Jilt-Flies, Mistrefs, I am not: Since I have been gone, you have been lolling your Tongue, I warrant; been ungraciously making Horns at me behind my Back, with that good Woman your Mother: —do whimper—Crocodile of Course—not a Tear falls but what hath a Devil in't.

Emil. How have I behav'd to deserve this?

Frop. By your damn'd Hypocrisy! I know your Thoughts, know you are a Woman, a sniveling, swooning, lying Woman; I know you, know you thro' your Disguise too, Traitors — In, d'ye hear? [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Pert and Abigail.

Pert. The best Plot in the World!

Abi. Is it not, Sir?

Per. That ever I knew in my Life; Gad, consider me!

Abi. I am to pretend the same to Mr. Blunt, as well to favour you in marrying my Mistrefs, as to oblige myself likewise by joining with him: Thank Mercy, I have liv'd to see my Mistrefs dispos'd of to her Wish; and you will be so generous for my past Services, I hope, Sir, to approve this Method of mine, of providing for myself against bad Weather.

Pert. Ay, ay, by all Means! Ah, poor Blunt! —but no Words on't, d'ye hear, Abigail? We must be very private in it—well, next to the disappointment of a Rival, there is certainly no greater Pleasure than to be reveng'd of him.

To

32 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or

To all the World I'll now assert my Right ;
Swell at their Envy, and assume in Spite ;
Secur'd by Conquest, Absolute I'll Reign,
Succeed by Power, and it by Pow'r maintain.

[*Exeunt.*]



A C T III.

SCENE Changes to *Cymena's*.

Enter Pert and Blunt.

Pert. **U**Pon my Life no more — nothing but
Malice.

Blunt. Well, hold your Puppy's Tongue ; I do
forgive you; what you say is not unlikely indeed.

Pert. Unlikely! — why he hath since va-
lu'd himself upon it, that he hath set his
Rivals at Variance, imagining, and not without
Reason, that thou'd we play the Fool, and Kill
one another, his Interest in *Cymena* were undis-
putable — Gad consider me! we are a sad Eye-
fore to him, and not without some Cause ;
I speak it without Vanity.

Blu. It's the first time ; thou ever didst so
then, I believe.

Pert. Nay, why so Satyrical *Ned*? — It was
very provoking, that's true, for her to promise
she wou'd marry him to Day, and then to dis-
appoint him after all. — But I know how well
she

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 33

she wou'd perform it; on my Word he hath no manner of Chance in her; I knew how it would be — she is a Woman of more Sense than that comes to; she will never throw her self away so, I warrant for her; she may have much more agreeable Men in my Mind: Some People will have it, he is Genteel, the Devil a bit, I think — there are others that say he hath Wit; but, Gad sink me! if ever I cou'd see it, and then for dress, he is the most irregular Man in the whole World.

Blu. Nay, if thou shouldst give him a good word, I should wonder.

Pert. Nay, but why that now? — O! —

Enter Abigail.

Mrs. Abigail! you must know that Mr. *Blunt* and I have hereafter agreed to lay aside all Animosities, and to join issue in disfavour of the common Enemy: Now the purport of the said Treaty is, that each party may and shall make what separate pretensions he pleases, to your Lady, on condition it be without lessening, or detracting from each other; and he that wins her, wears her without Complaint, Hindrance, or Molestation.

Abi. Very well, Gentlemen.

Pert. It is further agreed, that you stand absolutely neuter, excepting in some particular Cases which relate to our mutual Service, in which you are to be especially diligent: To perform which Engagements — [*Gives Money.*] but see, she comes. —

Abi. I thank you Gentlemen — Yes, I shall serve you with a Vengeance. [*Aside.*]

F.

Enter

34 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or,

Enter Cymæna.

Cym. Ha! they here! this is very unlucky —
[*Aside.*] — Your Servant, Gentlemen.

Blu. How d'ye, Coz? — faith you are very pretty to Day; I have a Months mind to put a Question home to you, in plain terms then, how shou'd you like me for a Husband! — what think you of a fine chooping Boy nine Months hence, with Dad's Nose, and some other good Qualities of his, which shall be nameless.

Cym. Indeed Coz. [*Pert. Laughs.*

Blu. Indeed, ay, indeed; what you think because my Features are not so soft, nor my Cloaths so exact as that Puppy's there, that therefore I am disagreeable: Prithee, Girl, how comes it that a finock Face, or a smooth Chin can make him a better Bedfellow? — for that, I take it, is your business.

Cym. Your Address is very delicate truly, Coz.

Pert. O most exquisite, ha, ha, ha.

Blu. 'Pshaw! Pox! plain dealing is best; I am for coming to the purpose, I am not for making a long winded Business of it; I know you cannot love me, and therefore think my self the most proper Person in the World for your purpose, because you wou'd not act so unfashionably I am persuaded, as to Marry any Man in the World, that you have the least Esteem for; to be sincere with you, I want your Money, your Cash, Coz; and in return, I have all the meek Qualities that you can require, to make that tame, obsequious Creature, call'd a Husband; have the Command of my Passions, can turn my Eyes inward, and put the other things into my Pocket upon Occasion.

Cym.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 35

Cym. Well, Sir, I shall consider of your Merit, and come to some Resolutions upon it the next time I see you.

Blu. Nay, I must, and will have a kind answer—the Dee'l take me, if I part with you so — I forbid the Banes faith! — and by vertue of a good Assurance do here find Cause and Impediment why you must, and shall marry no other.

Cym. You are very Merry, Coz.

Pert. Yes, yes, after his way, Madam, ha, ha.

Blu. His way, Sir, softly? — why, hast thou the vanity to think thine better, Civet-box? — a Pox of your fawning, creeping and cringing, your formal Air, and set Speeches! — rot me, if I don't think thee the veriest Fop in *Europe*.

Pert. He! — who I? — a very considerable Fellow, I---never a good Feature in my Face, Gad sink me! — I've a fine Hand, some say, but it is flattery, meer flattery, and that I wear my Cloaths well, others will say, but Damme, if I think there's such another thick scull'd Coxcomb in Christendom, as my Taylor—these Mechanics are grown so confounded positive, there's no having any one thing done to one's Mind: I have not the worst Face in the World, for Example, but this Scoundrel of a Perriwig-Maker hath given it so frightful a turn, that, Gad sink me! if I am not grown odious to my self [*Turns to the Glass.*]

Cym. You are so very modest — I think it well made now, Mr. *Pert*; nauseous Fop! [*Aside.*]

Pert. Do you really think so, Madam? — but don't you think it wou'd have been more becoming, had the foretop been made fuller? — and then it comes so forward to the Face. —

Blu. It hides your Asses Ears—what a Plague do you trouble us with your Impertinence for? —

36 *The Impertinent LOVERS: Or,*

who cares whether the Fool's Cap or his Coat fits best? — Come, come, Madam, is your Dinner ready?

Pert. A very strange Fellow thou art—but you know him, Madam?

Cym. Really, Gentlemen, you must excuse me at present; you will believe you are ever welcome to my Table; but at this time I am so unfortunate as to have nothing that is worth asking you to.

Blunt. No Excuses, good Coz; make us thankful for what you have; I warrant you, I'll make a Dinner out of it. [*Tucks the Napkin under his Chin, and sits to Table.*]

Pert. Well said *Ned*; stand to your Text, you Rogue; she wants to get from us.

Cym. Besides, it will not be ready this Hour.

Blunt. Well, well, we'll stay till it is then—we are not so sharp set, we are in no haste—none of your Fobbs, good Couzin; you expect another Lover I know, I see it in your Countenance; but here I sit, and will maintain it; the Devil of any Admittance can he have here to Day, rot me!

Cym. How shall I get rid of them, --- *Abigail*? Persuasion will never do—lay the Cloth in the other Room; I must be downright Rude, for it is to no purpose to dispute with them, I find.

[*Exit Abigail.*]

Pert over-hears.] Say you so, I'll be too quick for you, if possible tho'. [*Aside.*]

Re-enter Abigail.

Abi. Madam, Mr. *Snippit* waits below to try on your Ladyship's Stays.

Cam. You will excuse me Gentlemen.

Pert.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 27

Pert. Gad consider me, if I will! [*Presses out with Cym. and shuts the Door on Blunt.*]

Blunt. Ha! gone! — with that Fop too? — What a Pox is the meaning of all this? — No Mistress! no Dinner! nor no way to get out.

Pert above.

Pert. Ha, ha, I shall burst with Pleasure — all fair faith — the Devil take me, if I us'd any underhand Interest — Poor *Ned*! It's very hard the Door should be shut upon you at Dinner-time, that's true — but who knows the Good your Mistress designs you by it? — Women are contradictions, you know, *Blunt.*

Blunt. I shall break your Fool's Scul.

Pert. Nay, don't be in a Passion, *Ned*, — why so impatient? If she hath play'd you a slippery Trick, you are not the first by many, that has been serv'd so; there's nothing sure, nothing certain in this Life, not one individual Thing that we ought to set our Hearts upon; ha, ha, ha.

Blunt. It's very well — I shall find a time, d' ye see.

Pert. You must remember the Articles; I have done nothing clandestine, us'd no indirect Means; you see — my good Fortune hath been perfectly push'd upon me — I shall sleep in a certain Lady's Arms to Night, between you and I, I believe; we are agreed about Ways and Means, and are just going to Sign the Preliminaries you must know, and for you to be present, wou'd be the most improper thing in the whole World, ha, ha, ha.

Blu. So, so, Mr. Dog.

[*walks disturb'd.*]

Pert. Faith, I pity thee, heartily pity thee; it wou'd be barbarous to make you loose your Mistress

38 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Mistress, and your Dinner too—Say, do you love a boil'd Chicken? Or what shall I send you from Table? —What say you to *Scotch Collups Ned*? Or wou'd you have Pastry rather? then here's as curious a Haunch as ever Knife was put into? Why don't you Speak?

Blu. The Devil speak with you for me.

Pert. Don't be so ill-natur'd, I say! you will be better temper'd when you have din'd—I'll be with you immediately, if you'll have but Patience. [Exit.]

Blunt. A Pox of ill luck, say I.

Pert Returns.

Pert. But hold a little; upon Condition I serve you herein, you must promise me neither directly, nor indirectly to prevent my return, nay, speak, swear, or I'll not budge one Foot.

Blut. Well, I do——Damme—— [Exit Pert.]
That any Woman should set her Heart upon such a Dressing-box! such a thing of Thread and Trifles! Now wou'd I beat this Dog, unmercifully beat him, but that I am not so much in Love, as to baulk my Stomach yet.

Enter Pert with a Plate of Victuals.

Pert. Well, *Abigail*——besure hold the Door fast, don't let him in, I'll return immediately, [to Abig.]——Am I not very Generous? And is she not very Kind, now do you think? Not one Bit wou'd she let me eat, before I had brought you some; and very affectionately she recommends it, she bid me tell you: Look what a Nice Wing here is! she cut it with her own fair Hands, I can assure you, the Merry-thought too! Gad,

ACCOQUET at Her Wit's Ends. 39

Gad consider me ! if here's not the choice of the whole Table.

Blunt. Zounds, let me Eat, will you ?

Pert. Gad sink me, if ever I saw the like of you ! Was there ever such an Infidel ? If this be not a proof of her Respect for you, nothing is : She hath certainly a Kindness for you ; there is but one Person in the whole Sex, I believe, she more values : I do not know how it is, but I have always succeeded with that Sex, have ever been a lucky Dog among them : Poor *Blunt* ! --- Come, come, have a good Courage, it is not to be help'd : I'll prevail with her that you may be Brideman yet, if I can.

Blunt. Zounds and Blood ! don't provoke me, I say.

Pert. Well, I must go, the Dinner will be cold else, and I make the Lady wait — good bye, *Blunt* ; much good may it d' ye ; don't be dejected, Man, there are more Women in the World, thank Mercy, ha, ha, ha. — [*Goes to the Door, and finds it shut.*]

He, why, *Abigail* ! *Abigail*, I say ! --- Where a Pox can this giddy Girl be ? --- Open the Door, d' ye hear ?

Abigail above.

Abi. I must beg your Pardon, Sir ; my Lady hath given me her positive Commands to the contrary — be satisfy'd, Gentlemen, she hath Reasons for it — I'll follow you to your Lodgings in half an Hour, and inform you of them. [*Exit.*]

Pert. He ! what said she ?

Blu. Ha, ha, — why Squire ! — the Dinner will be cold, Squire ! the Lady will take it very unkind that you make her wait thus — what can

40 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

can this Girl mean by using you so, Um? — here is certainly some mistake — I can't imagine how she can answer this to her Mistress, it cou'd not be by her Orders sure, he?

Pert. Yes, yes, I understand her meaning in it — perhaps she would not be seen to favour me so publickly — besides it is very likely, that — but, I say nothing — but if she doth not Love me, it's a strange thing, that's all.

Blu. 'Pshaw! pox! love you? that's without dispute — she must love you — it is impossible it can be any thing but Affectation, that's certain — Thou Coxcomb! — nay, but why so uneasy? — you're not the only Man that ever lost his Mistress — there's nothing sure, nothing certain in this Life, not one individual thing that we ought to set our Hearts upon, you know, ha? it is hard to be baulkt of one's Dinner, tho' that's true; Here taste of mine, will you?

Pert. No, not one bit; I, have no Stomach.

Blu. You lye! — eat, I say! — it was design'd for both of us, it is plain! 'Sblood! do you think I will be your Slave? — Zounds! — why don't you eat?

Pert. I do eat — I shall certainly be poison'd, Gad consider me! nay, I prethee *Ned*, — that's so filthy of you to put your Fingers in the Dish! — Lard! Lard! what Hands are there? — that any Gentleman can delight so in nastiness!

Blu. You are so nice, and be hang'd to you — Eat, dy'e hear, and be thankful? or I shall wipe them in your Puppy's Face, faith will I.

Pert. Well, I do, I do. [*Peevishly*,

Blu. Make us thankful for all things, I think I have din'd very comfortably; they might have had the manners to have sent us a Bottle of Wine too;

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 41

too ; Come along, Brother *Blight* — this way leads to the Vault, and wee'l help our selves.

Pert. Well, don't haul me so.

Blu. Come along then — Church, King and the Founder, [Exeunt.

Enter Cymana, Abigail.

Cym. Are they gone ?

Abi. Yes, Madam.

Cym. 'Tis well, their stay might have been unlucky else : *Meanwell* must not be again piqu'd ; and yet I wou'd not displease the Fools neither, they are so very entertaining.

Abi. O ! there is no danger ! one is so little fond of himself ; he suspects every thing that is done in his favour ; the other so full, he can believe nothing to his prejudice : The Coxcomb persecutes you out of a despair of pleasing ; the Fop from an invincible Assurance he cannot do otherwise than please.

Cym. Well, it's an exquisite pleasure this, the power of Tormenting ! I shudder to think what a Precipice I was running upon — Marriage ! comfortable Condition ! when I have no longer a Taste of Liberty, and Life, I may possibly take to Spouse, if but to wean, and mortify withal.

Abi. And in good time, when gray Hairs and Wrinkles convince us of our frailty, we cannot better prepare for our Change : Of which, if I mistake not ; Marriage is a very good Emblem.

Cym. The comforts of the Cradle, Caudlecup, and the Chimney Corner, Good Lord !

Abi. To attend my Lord, and Master at Midnight, and read a Chapter to my Family in ! —

Cym. To fill a filthy, ill-natur'd Fellow's Arms !

Abi. And puke, and go an Airing for it !

G

Cym.

42 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Cym. To warm my Dear's Flannel Waistcoat!

Abi. And pay a Reverence to my Tyrant's Night-cap!

Cym. To make Baby Clouts for my little Boy!

Abi. And Horns for the great Booby!

Cym. Are blessings, from which Mercy deliver us; ha, ha.

Cym. Bless us, they are again return'd! let us step aside a little, and observe 'em. [*Withdraw.*]

Enter Blunt and Pert drunk, with a Flask.

Pert. To-to-t'other Bumper, and then! — plaguy strong Wine!

Blu. We-we-well, here's the King's health.

Pert. No, no, I bar that — the Church first — always the Church first; in all Civil and Christian Societies, the Church first.

Blu. 'Sblood! — I wish you be not a Papist, Jack.

Pert. No, no, *Ned*; no — no Papist, *Ned*; I do love the Church, with all my Life, and Soul, that I do, but — no Popery *Ned*. — No, no Whore of *Babylon* — I defy the Devil, and all his Works.

Blu. Da---damme, you are drunk.

Pert. No, no, drunk! — not actually drunk! — a little merry only *Ned*? — Church of *England* to you again.

Blu. Zounds! give me the Flask, will you? — I am two full Bumpers behind you in Religion, [*fill a Bumper*] — he — here's Orthodox for you — e -- e -- is not this truly Catholic? — I — am no false Brother, Damme.

Pert. Faith — faith, thou art an honest Fellow, *Ned*; Gad consider me! if thou art not — I — I wish the whole Nation were but as well inclin'd — we — were it not for a few such Pillars,

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 43

Pillars, Gad take me! if I know what wou'd become of the Church.

Blu. Why truly, there's so much Drunkenness, Profaness, and Debauchery gone forth among us, I--I--tre-tremble to think on't.

Pert. Ay, ay, ---e---e---it will never be better while ye — you know what Folks rule — bu — but I say no more — Wounds! I shall fall foul of my self — only in Mind — things are not as they shou'd be — I — it's too plain between you and I, that's — strange, very strange Lengths have been run, by — by some Men: bu---but it is no matter, while Men of such Integrity and steadfastness, as you, oppose 'em.

Blu. Sad times, very sad times truly! [*Sleeps.*

Cymana and Abigail appear.

Cym. Ha! they are fallen asleep! I wou'd not for all the World *Meanwell* should catch them here.

Abi. Mr. *Blunt* — Mr. *Pert* — why Gentlemen! [*Pulls 'em.*

Blu. Ay.

Abi. Dy'e hear? — an't you asham'd of your selves? — rise, I say.

Pert. Yes.

Abi. Why don't you then? my Lady is very angry with you, she will never forgive you — why don't you stir? — the House is all of a Flame, you'll be burnt as you lye — fire, fire, fire! will nothing do?

Blu. Sad times! very sad times, truly!

Abi. Gentlemen — why Gentlemen! [*Blunt wakes.*]

Blu. Ha! who are you! wh--who the pox are you? ---a narrant Whore by this Light! a very Devil in Petticoats, rot me! [*Seizes Cymana, and Ruffles her.*

44 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Pert. Wh — Whore! wh — what Whore? where is she? who talks of Whores? — Gad consider me! have I caught you? — Flesh and Blood! — Sinful Flesh and Blood, Gad sink me! [*Forces Abigail on his Knee, and Kisses her.*

Abig. What shall I do?

Blu. Well, co — come, be kind, Child, — I am as so — sober a civil Fellow, as you can wish to have to do with — I — I'll give you your price to a Farthing — bu — but Damme, if you impose upon me — E---every thing is as it shou'd be, I hope--le--lead to your Lodgings.

Cym. Brute! Monster! [*Struggles with him.*

Blu. Nay, no — none of your Airs, Mistrefs! — Damme none of your Airs, I say! 'Sblood! I shall kick you, if you are Sawcy, tell you that — who the plague d'ye think you have to deal? — wh — what a Pox can't you answer one civilly, he?

Cym. You're drunk, Beast — why *Abigail!*

Abig. Lord! Madam, I can't stir.

Pert. A l---little thing holds you, faith.

Blu. Come, come, Mistrefs — I am very sharp set, faith you had best surrender fairly, or I shall ravish, d'ye mind-she? — I can't see — I must run all hazards — but handsome, or not handsome, I must, and will lye with you, Zounds!

Cym. Intolerable Insolence! — don't you know me, Sir?

Blu. 'Sblood! not I, the Devil take me if I do — you are so — some kept Trull, I suppose; so — something of Yesterday, you are so damn'd proud — I — I will enjoy thee, I--- if but in Spite — don't forget your self; Miss — don't be high minded — I shall live to see you as much out at Heels, as others of the Sisterhood, Hussy! We — we shall find you in a Year or

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 45

two using of dark Alleys, and delighting Folks upon Bulks for Sixpence, Strumpet.

Cym. Grant me patience !

Blu. Now — how if by Accident or Infirmary you shou'd lo — lose an Inch of th — that pretty Nose of your's, Harlot ; — sh — shou'd you, I say — wh — what a pleasant turn it wou'd give to that Face ? and how wonderfully add to the Talent you have of Speech making, ha, Tinderbox ?

Cym. Scurvy, Scurilous Fellow ! that I had but strength enough to beat him [Struggles.]

Blu. Do — don't be angry, Mistress ! i--i-- if it comes to the worst, those rosy Lips, Cherry Cheeks and that dimple in your Chin, will still retain their Beauties — un — unless it happens to touch your Pallate indeed, and then — away goes th — that Ivory row of Teeth, and that lovely upper Jaw of yours.

Cym. Avaunt, Monster ! [Breaks from him and runs off.]

Blu. Ha, gone ! — I — I must not part with you so, faith. [Reels after Cymæna.]

Abig. So ! — he is again a Sleep, but what can I do with him ? [Knock without.]

Enter Cymæna hastily.

Cym. Nay, then we have no time to lose ; this must be *Meanwell* ; give me that Book — this Brute hath disorder'd me so ; that I am ill in reality. [Pert. carry'd off, Cymæna sits in a sickly Posture.]

Enter Meanwell.

Mean. Well, Madam, how do you do now ? Have you had the Advice of a Physician ?

Cym.

46 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Cym. Heaven help me !

Mean. Do you find your self the better for any thing you have taken ?

Cym. Very little, Sir, I am mightily out of Order still ; I can hardly breathe---*Abigail!*

Abi. Madam.

Cym. Have you done as I order'd you ?

Abi. Yes, Madam.

Cym. Before you admit no Company, d'ye hear? I am fit for no Conversation ; much talking goes thro' my Head — Is the Doctor gone ?

Abi. Yes Madam.

Cym. Let the Bill be sent to the Apothecary's ; I am the worst Person in the World to take Physick, I believe — What a Blessing is Health ! we never truly know it's Value, until we know the want of it — Is my Bed made ?

Abi. It is, Madam.

Cym. What News is there abroad, Sir ? Won't you please to Sit ? Will you be at my Lady Modish's Ball to Night ?

Mean. I believe, I shall, Madam, if you are not worse.

Cym. I beg that may not prevent you of your Pleasure, Sir ; pray my Duty to her Ladyship ; I wou'd have waited on her myself had I been well, hem !

Abi. Lord ! she will starve herself I believe, Sir — I can perswade her to eat nothing — Will your Ladyship sup a little Chicken Broath, Madam ?

Cym. No, I can eat nothing, my Stomach's quite gone, I am violently ill ; how my Head swims ; I must lay me down a little, perhaps Sleep may help me.

ACOQUET at Her Wit's End. 47

Mean. Have you found your self ailing any time? you seem'd to be very well Yesterday, Madam.

Cym. Alas! there is nothing certain in this World; we are poor crazy Creatures, Heaven help me; we are never well, ever uneasy; pray lay *Drillincourt* by my Bed-side. — Excuse me, Sir, I find myself inclin'd to Rest, sick, sick at Heart; I am almost weary of the World.

Mean. Fy, fy, my Dear, these Fears are unnecessary — a slight Indisposition only — you will be well in the Morning, I dare be confident.

Cym. O! no-body knows what I feel! — A cold Sweat lies all over me — I am faint, very faint; unnecessary Fears! I wish they may prove so — Ah! [*Scrieks, hearing a Snoring within, and faints in Meanwell's Arms.*]

Abi. O these Sots! What can I do with them? [*Aside.*]

Mean. Alas! she faints! haste, run, some Water — [*Exit Abig.*] What is that Noise that frightens her so? — But she recovers — How doth my Dear?

Cym. Pray, Mercy defend! — What Noise is that? A Death-warning I am perswaded; the same Noise, and in the same Place, fore-told my Mother's Death: I can't live long, that's certain.

Mean. Dreams! meer Dreams! — you must not be credulous; pray, Madam, take Courage, and oppose those Whimsies, they will do you an unspeakable Prejudice else.

Enter.

48 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or

Enter Pert in a Livery, follow'd by Abigail.

Abi. Sirrah! Rascal! cou'd you find no Place else but my Lady's Bedchamber to lay your Lumber in, Monster? How do you, Madam? Wou'd you think it? that Rogue *Roger*, whom you took but Yesterday into your Service, hath got as fuddled as a Beggár, and nothing could serve him forsooth, but your Ladyship's own Bed to sleep out his Debauch upon.

Cym. Insolent Varlet! pray let him be Stript, and turn'd out of my Service this Moment.

Abig. Yes, Madam——Yes, Madam——So! I have got one luckily off——if 'tother Brute don't fall a-sleep and spoil all now! [*Afide. Ex.*]

Mea. Dear Creature, be easy; don't afflict yourself thus.

Cym. Have I not occasion enough? Servants grow so saucy there's no enduring them——all my Afflictions come together——sure no-body was ever plagu'd like me——a scurvy Rogue; I took him without a Shoe to his Foot; took him from starving, but these Creatures have no Gratitude——

Enter Abigail.

Well, what said the Scoundrel.

Abi. What those kind of Vagrants usually do; receiv'd your Ladyship's Wages ungraciously, turn'd his Back unthankfully, mutter'd, and walk'd off.

Cym. Just the Nature of those Brutes; he hath been too well us'd, too well fed, like a Gun that is fill'd too high, if you discharge it, it flies in your Face——O my Heart! the Rogue hath disorder'd me so, I shall not recover it this Month.

Meant.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 49

Mean. Come, don't afflict your self about him; it does you more hurt than you can imagine — the idle Fellow is gone, all will be well again — I will no longer interrupt you, I wish you good Rest; How weak you are! *Abigail*, pray help your Lady; I hope, after you have Slept one Hour, I shall hear you are better.

Cym. Thank you, Sir, I am oblig'd to you however; I don't know how it may be; it is possible I may yet over come it, if I do die, I wish you all Happiness; there are Women in the World that are undoubtedly more capable of making you so happy than my self.

Mean. Mercy forbid it! why will you use me thus? Why will you break my Heart with this unkindness? I cannot bear the thought, you know I cannot; you will do well again, pray be not fearful.

Cym. O! I much question it! I best know my Condition — Ah! Heavens!

Mean. Who is within? [*Noise of a Table overturn'd within.*]

Abig. What shall I do? — I have it — stay Sir, — Madam, I wou'd have conceal'd the Girl's shame, but since it must out, there's your Cook Wench within too, as drunk as a Sailor, with twelve Months Wages in his Pocket; Heaven knows what they have been doing together, but together they were, and in a manner so unseemly! —

Cym. Grant me patience! was ever poor Woman so tormented? beastly Creatures! — Pray discharge her, and send her after her Brother Brute.

Abig. Yes, Madam.

[*Exit.*]

Cym. Well, What shall we say? there's no judging of any Person by Appearance; a

H

fly

50 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

fly Jade! I took her for as sober a Girl as cou'd come into any one's Family: What will this World come to? that any Mortals can be so shameless!

Enter Abigail leading Blunt cross the Stage dress'd in Women's Cloaths.

Abig. Ay! you may well hide your Face, and be hang'd! Mercy on me, how strong the smells of the Creature! — Come out thou vile Carion!
[*As he reels his Petticoat falls off.*

Omn. Ha!

Mean. Traitors! Devil! Chambermaid! Rascal! I suffer beyond patience — and are you really so ill, as you make your self, Child? Doth your Head swim, and is your Stomach out of order still? Damnation! — I see the mighty Reasons why you keep your Chamber; you do well to take care of your Health; your Caution is necessary; I don't wonder that I have been slighted; pray, ye, take to Fool, 'tis the best Physick you can apply to bring your self — but I am calm; your Property I've long been; for you Villain!

Cym. You have no business with him, nor shall you see his Face — [*Makes towards him, Cymena interposes.*] more of your sloven's Airs! — begon this Moment; and never see me more.

Mean. Make us thankful for it! you look pretty well again! you will not die this time, shameless Creature! — Yes, I will go, it's fit the World should know,

The worthy Choice you've made; they must approve

Your prudence in it; I resign all Claim?

What

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 51

What Woman can withstand such powerful
Charms?

Or what fond Man so hardy to oppose them?

Your Servant Lady! — good Sir, I wou'd be
known to you — by this you will be instructed
where to find me — [*Strikes at him, Abigail in-
terposes.*]

Cym. Insolence!

Mean. What not one Reason? — never an Ex-
cuse? — I crave your Mercy, this is your
Ghostly Father, perhaps, who hearing you were
ill, hath come charitably to assist you with pious
Thoughts; To what other purpose can a fine La-
dy entertain a Man in her Bedchamber? a Lady
of so much Vertue and Discretion too? — thou
Hypocrite.

Cym. I shall not satisfy you; to so jealous a
Temper there is no being justify'd, make the
worst use you can of your ungenerous Opinion;
and know, I no more want you to defend my be-
haviour, than I care whether you approve of it,
or no.

Mean. So, so, your Maid hath convey'd him
off too, I see — Offence! not in the least —
what tho' two Men were seen to come from your
Bedchamber disguis'd, and in Liquor too, the World
must be extream censorious! to question one of
your Ladyship's Prudence on such slight Circum-
stances; but perhaps there is nothing in all this;
cannot you persuade me that my Senses deceive
me, and that this is all Illusion, ha?

Cym. Then know to your everlasting Confusion
that all you have seen is true; those Men came
from my Chamber, and where there by my Or-
der, and which I wou'd have kept a Secret from
you, and all the World: I don't use to be que-
stion'd for my Actions, but since they are, the

52 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

last I shall give an Account of; know they are Friends of mine under some Misfortunes, who have Warrants out against them, who by the Laws of Hospitality, I am oblig'd to protect; they are, I hope, by this time out of danger, and you may commune your malicious Tempers as soon as you please. *[Exit.]*

Mean. How willingly I wou'd believe! I cou'd give up the Evidence of my Senses, and reconcile my self by Circumstances less probable.

How worthy of Compassion doth appear
The Wretch divided betwixt Hope, and Fear!
Tenacious of his Honour, and his Ease
Whom little things will pique, and less will
please.)
[Exit.]



A C T IV.

Enter Cymæna dress'd in Man's Cloaths with a Letter in her Hand, and Mrs. Snip.

Cym. **R** *Ead.]* “ Mrs. Snip, deliver the Habits
“ I bespoke of you to the Bearer; I am
“ just now going to my Lady Modish's Masque;
“ take no notice of this to *Cymæna*, or any Ser-
“ vant of hers — the World will know how much
“ she hath abus'd me, and that I have had at the
“ same Time Spirit enough to resent it; for in
“ Spite of her, and of her Fortune, I will this
“ Night put it out of her power of ever using
“ me ill any more.

Your's *Meanwell.*
Um—

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 53

Um, um much she hath abus'd me — um,
um — Spirit enough to resent it — um, for in
spite of her — put it out of her Power to use
me ill any more — Ha! — and did you
see him *Meanwell*, here with *Emilia* d'ye say?

Mrs. Snip. This Minute Madam, in those Habits
I sent, they cross'd the Gallery, and I believe
are gone into the Garden.

Cym. Um! then she's this Rival of mine, I
find; again they come this way I believe; it
shou'd be them by the Description you give me
of their Habits.

Meanwell and Emilia, cross the Stage.

Cym. How he Ogles her; how complaisant and
fond he is too! 'Sdeath, this is not to be born!
some way I must and will frustrate it yet. [*Exit*
hastily.

Mrs. Snip. So, I have put her on the Fret; now
to find out Mr. *Freelove*, if I can. [*Exit hastily.*

Enter Friendly, &c.

Whose there, Capt. *Friendly*?

Frien. Ay, my little Cock-boat; well, How
goes our Plot forward?

Snip. Admirably well! — I have shewn her
the Letter, and have intimated every thing that
cou'd make her jealous of *Emelia*, and bring it
to perfection.

Frien. It is well; — but see! they come this
way: *Cymana* hath attack'd her, I perceive, and
Meanwell hath step'd aside to favour her in it —
Go you, and secure us a Chair, and bid *Jack*,
the Boat-swain run a-Board, and provide for our
coming.

Snip.

54 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or,

Snip. I will, Sir.

[*Exit.*

Frien. All Hands, my Lads ; now for a fair Wind, and a prosperous Voyage.

[*Exit.*

Musick plays several Masques cross the Stage.

Enter Emelia Mask'd, Cymæna.

Cym. Melancholy, Matrimony ! you long for a Boy ; but your Husband is Impotent wou'd come and go at your Pleasure, but that he is humourfome ; live in the World like a Woman of your Fortune, but that he is so covetous, and perverse ; — common Complaints, but easily remedied, a vigorous young Swain, with a kind Occasion, will quickly dispel those Qualms.

Emi. No.

Cym. Are you a Maid then ?

Emi. Ay, Heav'n help me !

Cym. And disengaged, I hope.

Emi. I am so, to my Sorrow.

Cym. Why, that's well said ; and now, my dear Creature, unmask, and if I don't convince thee, that — [*Emelia unmask.*] It is she, — I think she knows me not ; she seems to regard me with Attention too — I'll try her further, we shall see whether her so much boasted Vertue be real or no ; Who but *Emelia* ? She was Prudent ; she was Vertuous ; she was Discreet, forsooth : these *Prudes* are so affected ; I'll be reveng'd of her, if but for her Designs upon *Meanwell*. [*Aside.*

Emi. Disappointed, by all that's Good !

Cym. But the most pleasantly disappointed that Man ever was — I was thinking how much your Beauty exceeded my Imagination, and amaz'd at an Excellence, that he only who sees it can have any Notion of.

Emil. Very gallant truly.

Cym.

A COQUET at Her Wits Ends. 55

Cym. Gallant! I am all Rapture! ten thousand pleasing things arise in my Mind to favour you; speaks you artful, generous, well-inclin'd. [*pulls her.*]

Emi. What mean you, Sir?

Cym. To give you the tenderest Proofs that is possible of my Passion for you; to hold thee to my Breast, press upon thy Lips, force thee to Joy, and sicken with excess of it, you little Rogue--- if she shou'd take me at my Word now! [*Aside.*]

Emi. Stand off! Lord! what will the World say?

Cym. Let them say their Pleasure; what need have you and I to care for an impertinent World? Come, be perswaded, my Dear; faith, you are very Handsome.

Emi. Don't you; O Gad! I can't bear it. [*Kisses her.*]

Cym. Prithee don't give thy self those violent Airs, Child! Hang bashfulness, Nature will have its way; Come, I won't have you oppose it, there's a Bed in the next Room; you'll make me swear, if you do not surrender quickly; Do I not know that this is all Affectation, and that never a one of your Sex can resist an Opportunity?

Emi. My Reputation is dear to me, and it wou'd be very indiscreet to expose myself to any young Fellow's Mercy: You seem to be a Man of Honour; if you will suffer yourself to be blind-ed, I have a Chair in waiting, which shall convey you to my Lodgings---Here comes Company.

Cym. With all my Heart---I'll follow you, Madam--- [*Exit Emi.*]

So! this will be a Revenge indeed; it delights me but to think how I shall triumph: I will yet carry on the Cheat to the last Instances she can give

56 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

give me of her Weakness, then balk her in her Expectations ; laugh at the Deceit ; expose her to the World, and glory in it — Now for a lucky Game at Blindman's Buff. *[Exit.]*

Enter Meanwell and Freelove.

Mean. Excellently manag'd!

Free. As we cou'd wish ; away you, and provide for their Reception. *[Exeunt differently.]*

Enter Blunt disguis'd, with a Letter in his Hand.

Blunt in the Habit of a Shepherdes, white Dimity, a Straw Hat, and a Crook — O ! yonder she comes ! Now shall I slip into the Possession of a fine Lady, and twenty thousand Pounds with a wet Finger.

Enter Pert disguis'd, with a Mask'd Lady.

Abigail following Mask'd.

Abi. Well, Sir, now I have dispos'd of my Mistress to her Satisfaction ; my next business is to provide for my self. *[to pert.]*

Pert. Ay, ay, do, do, *Abigail* — I shall burst my Sides with laughing, Gad consider me ! Go, dispatch, I say, I will take care of the Door that no body interrupts you. *[Abigail approaches Blunt.]*

Blu. *Cymana!* *[Softly.]*

Abi. Ay ; are you ready. *[Softly.]*

Blu. And have been this half Hour ; the Priest is in the Dark within, and waits for us — Fortune, by your Leave — I think I am no longer oblig'd to you *[Exeunt.]*

Pert.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 57

Pert. Bit, palpably Bit, ha, ha, ha—well, I will indulge myself most immoderately, to whisper the Secret among the Masks within; and bring them all out to partake in the Frolick—Why so Melancholy, my Love? [*Exit Pert and Masque.*]

Enter Angelina in a Quaker's Dress, follow'd by Freeloze.

Free. Who, *Angelina*?

Ang. Yea, verily.

Free. How long prithee, hast thou been led by the Spirit, Friend?

Ang. Ever since thou wert unluckily led away by the Flesh, Friend.

Free. How admirable well this dress becomes thee! Mercy on me! if ever I was so in Love with Godliness in all my Life—we shall be private within. [*pulls her.*]

Ang. I swear thou art very Impudent.

Free. I swear thou art very Handsome.

Ang. What can provoke thee to be thus Rude?

Free. Inward Light, fine Features, and the kind Occasion.

Ang. I am sorry thee hast not more Sense of thy Deliverance.

Free. How can I better express my Gratitude; than by offering her the First-Fruits of my Redemption, who hath luckily been the Means of it?—Come, you have not seen the Rarities; within is a Water-fall of Shell-work, and a Gallery of fine Pictures; there are Battles by *Le Brun*, and Conversations, by *Rubens*; a *Cupid* high finish'd, and a *Venus* and *Adonis*, by *Titian*; fine Pieces of Fruit by *Varels*; and the Amours of the Gods, by several eminent Hands, you'll

58 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

see *Jupiter* in *Metamorphosis*; the usefulness of Disguise in Love, and the success of a golden Shower; you'll find a fine Collation to gratify your Senses; gay Company to engage your Eyes, and soft Musick to delight your Heart — you must be kind.

Ang. Poor, inconstant Man! — will you ever neglect what is for your Happiness; never pursue any thing, but what is evidently for your ill? Can Inconstancy have Charms? Can Unsteadfastness please? Why will you be where I am? — Why, alas! why do I, after all I have seen, suffer it! [Weeps]

Free. O! my Conscience, she weeps!

Ang. Indeed I do; weep for thy Folly; I have, by good Fortune, an Hour's Liberty, and had Thoughts of innocently using it: Crimes in thee I dearly pity, which in another I shou'd abhor, ungrateful Wretch. [Exit.]

Free. A pox on this Vertue! I shall do no good with her.

Enter Calia Mask'd, and crosses the Stage.

Hark ye, my Dear, whither so fast?

Cal. To be Married.

Free. And have you thought sufficiently of it, Child?

Cal. As much as one resolv'd upon it ought to do, Child.

Free. Thou hast a good Shape, a becoming Air; a pleasant Wit; and, I fancy, no disagreeable Face: What if an honest Fellow shou'd take it in his Head to do thee a civil Turn, *Gratis*? Thou art a pruder Wench, I believe, and hope, than refuse it; Um?

Cal. Ha, ha, Ha.

Free.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 59

Free. A good merry Girl, faith; I find my Proposition doth not much displease; I shall therefore take it for granted, we are agreed, and according insist upon a Sample.

Cal. Nay, nay, for better or for worse.

Free. Um! not absolutely; not, but if thou hast a Nose in thy face, and hast not lost both thy Eyes, ten to one if we disagree.

Cal. I believe it; [Unmasks.]

Free. Calia!

Cal. The very same; How much Time you have lost, and with an old Acquaintance too?

Free. Thou know'st I love thee—for Heaven's sake, Mask, ——— here comes that jealous, awkward Creature, my Uncle, Sir Thomas, wou'd have me marry; I must speak her fair for my Interest, Pox on her!

Enter Pruderia, Mask'd.

Prud. So, so, Mr. *Freelove*, will nothing but Saint's Flesh down with you? Well, I never saw such a Man in my Life; I wou'd not be of your Temper for the World! Every new Face, and every tawdry Thing pleases you, I find.

Cal. I'd have you to know——

Prud. And I'll have you to know——

Free. 'Sdeath! what do you mean, Madam? this, this Lady is—what the Devil is she? [*aside.* O Lord! I wou'd not for all the World; why, I took her for you', any Body might have been so deceiv'd; I never saw two Persons more alike; [*aside*] You have something the better Shape now I see you together indeed.

Prud. very well, Sir!

60 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Free. Every Morning you are in my wish ; every Evening my Dream ; Convince yourself. [*Turning her to a Looking Glass.*] Can Features be more fine, or a Face more fair? I cannot think Nature was ever more lavish of her Beauties, or that any Belle had less Cause for being jealous of anothers.

Pru. Yes indeed! I can't choose — there's no Love lost between us, I believe — Jealous with all my Heart! not I, I'll assure you, Sir.

Free. Far be it from me to believe your Ladyship cou'd ever think me worthy your least Regard, your unkind Usage of me doth sufficiently manifest it.

Pru. I shou'd be well employ'd indeed! Fellows are vain enough of themselves, they need no Encouragement.

Free. How oft have I assur'd you of my Love, and how little Sense have you seem'd to have of it? *Apollo* was never more Passionate, nor *Daphne* more Coy; I am at once Surpriz'd, and delighted to find you here — I was fearful the Severities you have for sometime oblig'd your self to, wou'd prevent us that Blessing.

Enter Mrs. Easy mask'd, takes him a part and unmasks.

More Interruption! Who; *Mrs. Easy*? — My Dear, I am very glad to see you, I had been with you this Morning — only —

Easy. Impudence! the Curses of an injur'd Maid light on thee!

Free. Prithee, put on a pleasant Look; that Frown gives so odd a Turn to that fine Face, methinks.

Easy.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 61

Easy. Yes, you shall have kind Looks, Villain! am I not abus'd, ruin'd and undone? Is this the End of your Oaths, and Promises? Was I not to be marry'd to you this Morning? and have you not amus'd me with Pretence of Business? — I'll be aveng'd. —

Free. Pray speak Lower; nothing but Impudence can help me!

Easy. No, my Misfortunes are but too manifest; the World will know my Shame, as they shall thy Perfidiousness — I am four Months gone with Child Ladies, by this Monster, I am undone: O that my Rage wou'd choak me!

Pru. Cal. Ha!

Free. So it's out — prithee, don't be so Passionate, my Dear — you very much mistake me; I will go to Church with you this Moment; you shall find I am not a Man of that little Honour you imagine. *[Exit with Easy,*

Pru. The confident thing! — he'll not marry her sure!

Cal. I know not what to think of it! — fire, and Flames!

[Walks in disorder.

Freelove Enters.

Freelove. So, I have put her into a Chair, fully persuaded that I will follow her; now to convince these Ladies, that there is nothing in all they have seen and heard. *[Aside.]* Ha, ha, ha. *[Laughs as he advances.*

Cal. Graceless Creature! how can you be so wicked?

Pru. Abandon'd Wretch!

Free. Why, Ladies, you can't be serious sure? did you not perceive all the Symptoms of a distracted Woman in her? why this is Mrs. Frontlet, the

62 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

the *Torkshire* Heirefs, that fell in Love with Beau *Shapely*; every Body must have heard of that Affair——How she got out, I know not, but to my certain Knowledge, she hath been confin'd to Water-Gruel, and a dark Room for these Ten Months past.

Fre. Is it possible?

Cal. She look'd, and talk't wild indeed, I thought.

Free. How ungenerous it is of you to suspect me guilty of so much baseness! you but too well know the Power you have over me — O charming Nymph! if ee'r you find—*Exeunt his Hands round their Waists, and Sings.*]

Enter Pert and a Masque followed by several others.

Pert. Poor *Blunt*! poor *Blunt*! how queer he'll look when he finds himself bit! well, I will so plague him! We shall have rare Diversion, faith? But see, the Door opens! stand you all still, and let me alone to rally him.

Enter Blunt leading a Masque.

Joy, much Joy to you Mr. *Blunt*; here's a fly Rogue for you, Gentlemen, and Ladies! what you have crept to Bed too, I warrant? and thought to have cheated us of the usual Ceremonies, he?

Blu. Why I must confess it is more private, and suddain than I design'd it, but it was the Ladies Humour, *Pert*; and they have very odd Humours sometimes you know, Chuckle.

Pert. As you will find, if I mistake not, ha, ha, ha.

Blu.

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 63

Blu. Ha, ha, ha (tauntingly)—why yes, Jack-a-napes, for know to thy present Confusion, I have this Hour married *Cymena*, and in the next will bid fair for a Boy shall everlastingly do it.

[*Company Laugh.*]

Pert. Very good again! ha, ha, ha.

Blu. Why what the Plague ails you? who d'ye Laugh at? I think the Devils in all the People; Wounds! Is the Enjoyment of a fine Woman, and twenty thousand Pounds become so Ridiculous?—

Pert. No, but the loss of that fine Lady, with twenty thousand Pounds is.

Blu. Why hast thou the solemn Impudence to deny that this is *Cymena*?

Pert. Positively! nay, but you shall promise me not to be angry!—a simple Mistake only, Gad consider me! like the Ladies Cast off Apparel, you are descended to her Servant, that's all.

——[*Unmasks her, Company Laugh.*]

Blu. Death, and the Devil, *Abigail*!

Pert. Nay, but *Ned*, prethee *Ned*, this Passion is so unseemingly——O Lord, how you look! how strangely it disorders the Complexion! I wou'd not have so Ungentleman like a Phiz for such another Deceit, strike me Dumb! ha, ha, ha.

Blu. Blood and Wounds don't provoke me!—and for you, Madam.——

Pert. O! no violence to my Wife, I beseech thee *Ned*!—that any Body can be so impatient! nothing recommends a Man more than his meeting his Misfortunes with Temper; I am sorry for thy loss, *Ned*; but *Cymena* was not design'd for a Man of thy Complexion, she was not faith, *Ned*——ha, ha, ha.

Blu. What, *Cymena*'s your's, and I am the Fool then, he, Puppy?

Pert.

64 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or

Pert. Certainly ! ha, ha, ha.

Blu. Zounds ! I say, what cou'd provoke you to use me thus, Madam ?

Pert. Ha, ha, I cannot help it faith ; good *Ned*, excuse me ; it is a little ungenerous, I must own, to divert my self thus immoderately at your Cost, but Winners you know have a Priviledge, ha, ha, ha.

Blu. Ouns ? I say. —

Pert. Under 'favour, *Ned*, it is I am to say : You must thank your self for it, it was none of my Wife's seeking, but you would be always impertinent, I must say that ; this comes of being ambitious, *Ned* ; thus it is when Men think too well of themselves ; No good ever comes from looking so much above us — Gad consider me ! she had no view (not she) but what was charitable, in making you a good Christian, and so bringing you to an humble Sense of your self, ha, ha.

Blu. I shall crack your Coxcomb's Skull !

Pert. Why what in Heaven's name could'st thou promise thy self ; *Ned* ? Lard, Lard ! that a Man of so odd a Figure, and so little Breeding can be so vain ! take warning by this *Ned* ! never endeavour at any thing so much out of thy Element ; my word for it, there is nothing in thy Dress, or Behaviour, that is turn'd for the Conquest of a fine Lady : Come, come, be thankful for the Fortune you have ; Mrs. *Abigail* hath given you an Instance of her Ingenuity, and my Wife, and I will promise Sir, for her Honesty, ha, ha, ha.

Blu. I scarce believe yet *Cymena* can be such a Fool to throw her self away upon such a Whelp.

Pert. Look ye *Ned* ! — you may believe what you please, you will not believe your Eyes perhaps ; why now if I should oblige you with a
fight

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 65

fight of her, you may think it may be, your Senses deceiv'd you — I wou'd conceal thy Shame, I wou'd not willingly triumph — but since what must be — I'll show you *Cymana*. [*Unmasks Her, [and discovers Beatrice, Company Laugh.*

Blu. Puppy ! much joy to you Puppy ! — why how like a Rascal you look now ! will you never be convinc'd ? have I not often told you, you were never turn'd for the Conquest of a fine Lady ? ha ! what, you are at the bottom of this, my fair Spouse, ha ? — well, I cou'd be almost reconcil'd to thee for thy Wit ; but if I live not with thee, I will bestow a good Separate Maintenance, and that will be as well you know.

Abi. As you, please, my Dear.

Blu. 'Sblood ! you are so indifferent, I may as well take thee home — rather keep thee for my own use than other Men's — it is some Comfort however that Whelp is bit — By'e Puppy !

[*Exit Blunt and Abig.*

Pert. Gad consider me ! if I am not the most concern'd Man living ! this is the most confound-ed Business — why how came this, Child ? — who are you ? — what are you ? — this is only a Frolick ? — I hope ; a Footman in a Priest's Habit, or so ; — I wou'd not for the World it shou'd be real ; thou wou'dst be the most undone Woman upon Earth, my Dear ; I shou'd certainly shorten thy Days, I shou'd use thee so bar-roufly. —

Bea. I am oblig'd to fee it — for better, or for worse, Dearee, heigh, ho !

Omn. Ha, ha, ha.

Pert. A Pox confound you all. [*Exit Pert.*

K

Bea.

66 *The Impertinent* LOVERS : Or,

Bea. So ! — I must after my Bargain.

Spouse, be content; if like the Churl you appear,
Your soon perhaps may find th'Effects on't here.

[*Makes Horns with her Fingers.*

A C T V.

S C E N E *on Shipboard.*

Enter Capt. Friendly, Meanwell, Mate, &c.

Friend. IS your Crew all under Hatches ?

Mate. They are, Sir.

Friend. And every thing done as I order'd ?

Mate. Yes, Sir.

Friend. Sir, you are welcome on Board; Come, here's Prosperity to the Royal *William*, a tight Ship, and a good Sailor she is, tho' I say it as ever went Abroad; I have serv'd my Country in her, Man and Boy, these five and twenty long Years, and came to her before the Mast, I care not who knows it.

Mea. It is the more to your Credit, Sir.

Friend. Sir, I love my Country, and I love my Friends, and wou'd willingly spend the last drop of Blood I have in their Service: I have done them some Credit Sir, and have been rewarded for it, so no more of that — Come, Sir, here's his Majesty's good Health.

Mea.

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Mea. With all my Heart, Sir.

Friend. We are aground, faith! — Boy! another Bottle! Sir, you don't drink — we are Head of you.

Mea. I cannot drink any more, I thank you!

Friend. Come don't be melancholly! a Glass of Brandy will not hurt you, I am sure; Drink, I say; it's a certain Remedy against Despair; it gives Eyes to the blind, Feet to the Lame, and Courage to the Cowardly — Come, your Mistress's Health, and Success to our undertaking.

Mean. Pray excuse me.

Friend. I will not excuse you, Sir, — take it off, I say; it will make the Wench kind, or Thee careless, whether she be so, or not: Be

Mea. I am sorry I shou'd give you all this trouble.

Merry, Man.

Friend. Sir, you are as welcome as my Prince; I am heartily glad I can serve you; we are in Cruise of the little Frigate, and will make a Prize of her, before we Sleep, I warrant you; Where's *Freelove* all this while I wonder? — [*Hollow without.*] there they come — see you, and bring to — put out the Candles, and every Man to his Post. [*Exeunt Omnes.*]

Enter Cymæna in a Chair, Hoodwink'd — Chair-man leads her out.

Cym. A pretty sort of an Intrigue } *A Noise*
this! pray Heaven, it ends well. Ha! } *without of*
what Noise is that? where have these } *Haul away.*
Fellows brought me? I shall be assassinated in
the dark, and for a Crime I am not capable of
committing — Oh! here comes a Light. [*Pulls*
the Blinder off.]

68 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Enter a Servant and cross the Stage.

I crave your Mercy; a good Supper, and clean Sheets have nothing frightful in them — What now?

Enter Beatrice Dress'd.

Her Chambermaid, I suppose — your Mistress is at present a little engag'd but will wait on me immediately — is it not so, Um?

Bea. Alas, poor Lady!

Cym. What mean these Tears?

Bea. Be not surpriz'd that I know you to be a Woman; a Compassion for a Lady in your Condition obliges me to this Instance of it.

Cym. I understand you not.

Bea. You will not wonder I interest my self in your Condition, when you shall know I was formerly as you have lately been, the only promise of a Wealthy and an Honourable Family; My Fortune (or as they wou'd persuade me (my Wit and Beauty) gave me many Admirers: The Idle, the Impertinent, the Polite, and the Pleasurable were daily at my Levee, and said, and did a hundred little Gaities to convince me of their Esteem, and Attachment: *Philander* from the rest was distinguish'd for his Beauty, his Wit, and his Discretion, he was continually obliging me with his kindest Offices, and I repaying them with the most generous Regard; In short, he ask'd me in Marriage, and I gave him my Consent, believing it as Material to his, as my own Happiness; the Day was appointed, and every thing in a readiness for the Ceremony.—

A COQUET at Her Wit's End. 69

mony.— But now to come to the most wretched Circumstance of my Life :— It was agreed I shou'd go to a little Village some few Leagues from the Town I liv'd in ; *Philander* was to have follow'd me ; this was for greater privacy, and to prevent the Impertinence which is frequent on these Occasions ; I had gone but a little way, before I was beset by six Men in Masks, who bound my Coachman, forc'd me from my Chariot, and notwithstanding all I could do, carry'd me off: I tore my Hair, beat my Breast, and made the most lamentable Execrations against the Villainy of the Action, but to no purpose: They bore me to the Sea-side, and put me on Shipboard, pittiless to my Anguish and my Reproaches ; I cou'd not longer upbraid, no more entreat ; my Spirits forsook me, and I sunk into a Swoon : But what Words can tell the Despair I recover'd in, when I found myself abandon'd to the Arms and Abuse of the most profligate of Men ? no way left to repair my lost Honour, no Man living to revenge my injured Reputation— I live a Slave to the base Desires I have once gratify'd, and am condemn'd to an eternity of Horror and Misery !

Cym. Alas ! Where will this end ?

Bea. To our mutual Confusion you are in the same Ship, and under Sail, at the absolute Pleasure of the same impious Wretch, who is my Curse, my shame, and my Misfortune.

Cym. Ha ! what do I hear ?

Bea. In vain I provoke him to Kill me ; I am weary of Life ; I sicken at the Light, yet want the Means to deliver myself from it ; he triumphs over my Innocence ; delights with my Rage, and when the Brute inclines him, obliges
me

70 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

me by the most barbarous Methods to repeat the vicious Ruin.

Cym. Distraction! sure I mistake you; is not this Madam *Emilia's* Lodgings? Had we not separate Chairs? and am I not here by her Directions?

Bea. By the Artifice of some Woman you are here bound for *Turkey*, as I before inform'd you; her Name I know not; I have only learnt you were her Rival in a certain Gentleman's Affection — *Meanwell*, I think they call him, and whom I understand she is to marry this Night: She recommended you to the Captain of the Ship, as fit for his Pleasure; he hath seen and approves you, and those *Mutes* you saw enter'd but now, are to prepare you for the Sacrifice.

Cym. Sold by *Emilia*! to favour her Marriage with *Meanwell*! at the will of a Villain to be prostituted! enslav'd, and undone! Heavens, 'tis impossible! it cannot, must not, shall not be — it is all Illusion!

Bea. You are out of Temper, I am sorry my good Will should be misinterpreted; you shall soon be convinc'd of your Misfortunes; Heavens have you in his Care.

Cym. Stay, Madam; am I certainly so miserable as you make me? Is there no way left to redeem me? For Heaven's sake take Compassion on the distress of a Maid, whose All is at stake! Oh! this vile Woman! I shall certainly run Mad.

Bea. I wish there were, Madam, you need not take any Assistance; but we are a considerable Distance from Shore by this time; here he reigns absolute, and prefers the gratifying of
one

A COQUET at Her Wits Ends. 71

one brutal Appetite, to that of a hundred less violent Inclinations, your Virtue, Wit and Perswasion, will have no other Effect, but to make you the more desir'd; and that you are so beautiful' will be a Means to make you sooner miserable.

Cym. What shall I do? O! that I had never been born! my Heart will break; But who can I blame? it is what I Merit; it is what I have sought; I might have been happy in my dear *Meanwell*: Cursed be the little Pride that hath delay'd my greatest Happiness, and the Hour which taught my Tongue to equivocate: Now, now he is another's; the triumphs in the Possession of his Heart, in my Misfortune too the doubly Triumphs; O! 'tis too much to bear!

Bea. You see the fatal Bed; the Diligence of the Slaves shew their Master's Haste, his Temper is not to be disputed with—I must be gone; the *Mutes* enter, and by their Actions warn me to withdraw.

Cym. I beg you do not leave me! I cannot part with you; I know not what to do, gentle fair one; Shall I deface these Features, and stab each Charm? Is there no Dagger, Poison, or Perswasion? Say, say, Oh! how shall I avoid this impending Ruin?

Bea. All the Comfort you can expect is, he marries those he wou'd enjoy, and like the Grand Seignior, gives them afterwards to his Tributaries; this however may a little mitigate the Misfortune; for in the Eye of the World, an unhappy Wife, merits more Pity than a wretched Prostitute.

Cym. Marry him! Despair, Destruction, everlasting Shame shall be my Portion first;

Forbid

72 *The Impertinent* LOVERS: Or,

Forbid it Heaven!

That ever I shou'd tacitly consent

By solemn Compact to give up myself,

And to be his, who's form'd for my Aversion!

It's wicked weak, and most unrighteous Whoredom:

Ye Guardian Gods! let Vertue be your Care.

Bea. I must go, I cannot see your Misery; past Horrors arise to my View, and give me anguish unspeakable, if I may advise, marry him, it will somewhat justify your Iniquity to the World, and give more quiet to you in reflecting on it—I must leave you again, they shake their Heads, and are impatient for your Answer—Once more, farewell.

Cym. Ruin'd past Hope! nor Gods nor Men will hear me;

Yet stay, I have a thousand things to say to you, Give me but one Moment's Patience—

Bea. I cannot bear the Sight! again they drag me to the horrid Scene, and 'midst Petitions, Prayers, and Reproaches, Sighs, Tears, and Groans, they press me to their Purpose. [*breaks from her.*]

Cym. Will you then force me, barbarous cruel Men? [*Mutes approach.*] Have you no Sense of Vertue? As you hope for Peace, in this, or in another Life, have Pity on my helpless Innocence—No Goodness; no Remorse! Command the Priest to be ready; I attend the fatal Summons—[*Mutes Exit.*] Some time it gives me; but Oh! what use can I make of it! it but prolongs my Sorrows; and midst Improbabilities despair from Help, and Hope in sight of certain ill, it lengthens and increases the Misfortune. [*Mutes enter.*] Again they come, and urge me to the Service:

Yes,

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Yes, Slaves, I must obey th' unwelcome Office,
Disease, Distraction, Death! will nought re-
lieve me? won I not? [Exit.

Enter Freelove and Emilia.

Free. Excellent Creature! thy Plot succeeds
to a Wonder; it hath been so admirably well
contriv'd, it gives not the least Cause for Suspi-
cion; and in its Circumstances so happily Man-
ag'd, that nothing but a little too much Cruelty,
can be objected to it.

Emi. I warrant it hurts her not; a less Di-
strefs might amuse her Senses, but wou'd not
have distracted them; and had we given her
more Room for Thinking, she wou'd have found
new Occasions to perplex us.

Free. Thy Wit charms me; will you give
Credit to me, Madam, if I again mention my
Passion to you, and that I am ready to give you
a Proof of my Sincerity of preferring you to all
the World?

Emi. And so forfeit my Discretion — No, no,
I must have better Evidence of your Passion be-
fore I'm brought to regard it.

Free. What can be more positive?

Emi. Swinging in a String, or swimming in a
Stream; nothing less can justify my believing
you in this Affair, where to perswade and deceive,
hath been your Pleasure and Practice; a fine
Gentleman, and in Love! 'tis mean, and ungen-
teel; and one may as well presume on the con-
tinuance of the Wind and Weather, as depend
upon the Faith of one so inconstant.

Free.

74 *The Impertinent* **LOVERS: Or,**

Free. It is true, Madam, I have, as you observe, liv'd at large, flatter'd every Face, and fancy'd every Fair, but I now see the folly of it; I here renounce my Errors, and faithfully promise a new Life.

Emi. Well, henceforward as you behave, expect to find Mercy—but see they Enter—

Enter Meanwell dress'd like a Turk forcing in Cymana.

Mean. No more.

Cym. Yet take Compassion on me, do not ruin me! Pity my Innocence, I cannot bear it! You'll break my Heart; I am not for your purpose.

Emi. Ha, ha, ha.

Free. Poor Meanwell.

Emi. Unhappy Cymana.

Free. That ever Man should take so much Pains for a crack'd Pipkin!

Emi. Or Woman so Confident as to make a Confession of it!

Cym. Ha! am I Trick'd then?

Mean. As sure as you live.

Cym. And have marry'd me too?

Mean. Certainly, my Dear Inconstant.

Cym. Follow me if you dare, if I am not reveng'd on you!

Mean. With all my Heart! *[Exit.*

Cymana follow'd by Meanwell.]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, the Musick you order'd is come A-board.

Free. Is the Company come too that is expected?

Ser. They came with them, Sir.

Free. Let them Play then, *[Musick Plays. Enter*

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*Enter Fropish, Angelina, Abigal, Beatrice, Blunt,
Pert, &c. and Sit. A Dance.*

Free. How can you be so good, Madam, as to forgive me? [*To Angelina*] how cou'd I have a Thought to the Prejudice of so much Vertue! — You too, Sir, [*To Frop.*] deserve my special Thanks, first to pardon me for my ill Designs upon your Lady, and generously given me your Consent to Marry this — let our Joys to Night be Universal — you too must assist in it [*Joyns the Hands of Pert and Blunt with their Wives*] let what is past be forgot, and remember, that whatever Inconveniences you have brought your selves into, have been purely thro' Indiscretion.

Variety! thy Service I lament,
And all those trifle Hours I've idly Spent;
No more thy specious Promises disguise,
Abuse my Nature, and delude my Eyes;
No certain Joys we find in Age, or Youth,
But what proceed from Constancy, and Truth.



F I N I S.